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[CALDERWOOD ASSERTS A FATHER'S AUTHORITY.]

## MISS ARLINGCOURT'S WILL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"Leaves of Fate," "Octavia's Pride," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XIV.

PELEG MOSS was growing feeble. He became aware of it when he found how long the walk between the churchyard and his little cottage seemed to him, under the noonday sun. But he had been seized with a persistent fit of industry, and would give himself but little rest.

The Arlingcourt vault, he declared, had been shamefully neglected; and he set himself to remedying the remissness of previous years.

"What if I should die, and leave it so," he asked himself again and again, and almost felt that he should hardly be able to face his former master, in the other world, because of it.

So he set himself perseveringly to clearing out the rubbish, rubbing off the damp and mould, even to brightening the blackened ornaments of the decaying coffins. Old Silas came to help him occasionally, and all their talk was of the dead and gone Arlingcourts, mingled with dismal regrets for the melancholy life of the last of the proud line. But oftener the old sexton went plodding round all alone, talking to himself in a quaint fashion which would have puzzled the most familiar listener. Madge alone understood and sympathised with him; and when she found how tired and spent he was when he came to his dinner, she got into the habit of sending them over to him by the boy, who was never a hindrance, but always a welcome companion.

It happened one day, that as Peleg sat on a bench at the foot of the stone steps, leading down into the Arlingcourt tomb, taking this noonday meal, brought by little Malcolm and the dog, he was surprised by the visit of two women. He did not see at first that one was Madge, so differently did she look in the queer old-fashioned cap she had put on, snatching in her haste at the first thing she found, which chanced to be one of old Elipseth's caps, left by the old woman

as a sort of stab, to remind Peleg of the treasure he had sent away from him. But her companion he knew at once, notwithstanding her plain attire, and the changed, haggard face. She came shrinking and hesitating, who had used to walk proudly and defiantly.

"You wish to see me, Miss West?" said he, inwardly quaking with fear that she might ask to look into Miss Cornelia's coffin.

Barbara West's face was very pale, and she shuddered from head to foot the moment the damp atmosphere of the tomb struck upon her. Her eyes were veiled by the drooping lids, or Peleg would have seen and marvelled at the wild, scared look in them.

"Nay," said she, in a voice that was scarcely above a whisper, as if she feared ears under the mouldering coffins might also hear. "I did not come of my own accord; this woman was obstinate, and would not answer me a word, except it was in your presence. I did not want to come; how can you stay here?"

And again she shivered, and shook as if with cold.

"Stand out closer to the steps, ma'am, where the warm air can reach you. I'm used to it and don't mind the damp," said Peleg, courteously. "What is the trouble, Madge?"

"This woman sir. She persists in asking me, and I'm nae sure about the right. She kens something o' my secret."

At this, Barbara lifted her head, and darted one of her searching glances on the old sexton's face.

"I've watched her, and I know there is a meaning in her watching our house at night, and hanging about the town. She is a stranger here, but I know why she tarries. I asked her to give me a proof that this boy here, has a legal right to the likeness I detected the first time I set my eyes on his face. But she is obstinate and will not say."

"I dinna ken the right way," said Madge; "you shall say what is best, sir."

But Peleg was also puzzled; he stood passing his horny hand across his forehead in perplexity.

Barbara West made an impatient movement.

"I will go to Reynold Raleigh and tell him of these

two; perhaps he will not be so tardy in his explanation."

"The chattering women used to say he would marry you—that you loved him," said Peleg.

Her great eyes, looming out of the dark hollows, flashed scornfully.

"It is false!" she cried, stamping her foot fiercely. "I do not love him. I hate—hate him! and if there be only a prospect of his downfall, I shall find the only pleasure left me in life."

"He has wronged you also?" said Peleg.

"The deepest wrong possible. He has wrought my ruin here—and," she paused to cast a shuddering glance inward towards the coffins seen through the archway, "perhaps also beyond this world—who can tell? I tell you I do not love—I hate him!"

"It is enough, I maun e'en tell her the truth," exclaimed Madge Ramsay. "Yonder, he whom ye call Reynold Raleigh, deceived, betrayed, deserted me also! but, by the laws of Scotland, I am his ain true wife, an' he canna put me away!"

Barbara West clapped her hands, and danced up and down in insane delight.

"This is grand! grand! I know, I remember very well that long stay of his in Scotland. Tell me the whole—show me the proofs."

"The proofs are safe; in good time they will be brought forward," said Peleg, a little uneasily. "It is no small thing for poor people to make such a stir against folks in high standing."

Barbara laughed scornfully.

"In high standing, indeed! What right has he to this property? The very fact of being married prevents him from having any claim upon it. Let him come down to his proper place, and he will understand how pleasant it is to be trampled upon. Ho! ho! this is glorious! just when he thinks he has the prize he has plotted for, the fortune he coveted, and the girl he loves. Ho! ho! said I not Miss Arlingcourt's curse would work?"

"Miss Arlingcourt? woman, what do you know?—what deadly stab did that man give to Miss Arlingcourt's peace of mind," cried out old Peleg, catching his breath sharply.

"He separated her from the husband she loved. He sent her to an untimely grave. I was only the cat's-paw—the cat's-paw," answered Barbara West, looking again towards the coffin with that singular cowed look in her eyes.

Peleg groaned.

"And she is dead and gone!—dead and gone. The last Arlington! and it is too late to help it."

"Hush!" whispered Barbara, creeping closer to him, the inkly pupil dilating until it almost covered the whole iris of her eye. "She is dead, but she is not gone. The coffin there does not hold her. It is a secret, mind you don't tell it."

Peleg looked at her with a blanching face. Had she also discovered the absence of the body of the last Arlington from among its kindred dust?

"What do you mean?" he faltered.

She held up a warning finger, and glanced around stealthily, with a look which made the blood creep coldly in the veins of her companions.

"Hush! she walks out of her coffin when the night comes. She cannot rest, you know. Murdered people never remain quiet until they are avenged. When she has done with me, she will haunt him. I see her very often."

"You see Miss Arlington?" ejaculated Peleg.

Madge pulled at his sleeve, and whispered: "The poor creature is crazy, sir; it's no good crossing her."

But Peleg shook her off, and seized Barbara's hand.

"Where have you seen Miss Arlington, and when?"

"Often, often; but at dead midnight, just at the head of my bed, with that bottle in her hand, every night of my life; though I shut my eyes over as tightly, and cover the thickest blanket over my head," was answered in a low, apologetic tone.

"She is dead, she is clean out of her senses," whispered Madge.

"I have seen Miss Arlington myself," continued Peleg, eagerly. "I wish I could see her again."

"Come with me to-night, at the hour when ghosts walk, and you shall see her," said Barbara West. "In the old corridor of the west wing she is always sitting about."

"I shall come to-night," answered Peleg, with a solemn cadence in his voice.

"And you will help this woman to overwhelm Reynold Raleigh with the proofs of his villainy?" continued Miss West, coming out of that strange mood of hers, and resuming her natural manner. "For the sake of the innocent girl there, you must do it."

"We will go to a lawyer at once. To-morrow, perhaps; but to-night I shall come to see Miss Arlington."

"You are not afraid?" asked Barbara West, wonderingly, and then she sighed dimly. "Ah! it is because you never wronged her."

"Nay, it is because I am sure she has forgiven me," returned Peleg, gently.

"But there are some things too terrible to be forgiven; yet perhaps when he who was the chief wrongdoer is driven from his place, she will come back to her coffin, and leave me in peace. I shall wait and watch. Good bye."

And pulling her veil over her face, she turned away and hurried up the steps.

Little Malcolm, who had grown weary of this grave scene, whose meaning he could not grasp, was playing up above, the warm sunshine filtering through his golden curls.

Barbara West, hurrying by, stopped short, and dropping down on her knees, looked up into the childish, wondering face.

"So like, so like," she muttered; "only innocent. Pitiful heavens! who knows if I had had only a child to love me, and keep me pure, but there might have been a lowly place up there in the shining heavens for me also? But it was not to be; I was marked for one of the lost; like Judas, I betrayed my friend and benefactress to her death. What hope can there be for me? If old Peleg is with me to-night, I shall have courage, and I will ask her if there be any hope for me."

And then, to the child's wonderment and terror, she covered his little sunburnt hands with kisses, put a silver coin into them, and ran away.

He screamed out for his mother.

"Mither! mither! come and see what the Liddy has g'ed me! Come and see!"

Madge, with old Peleg, emerged from the tomb, they were talking earnestly, and gave him little heed, until he began to cry, pulling all the while at her skirt.

"Puir bairn!" sighed Madge, as she heard his story, "you should ha'e better rights than these. Keep the siller, for it is the first g'ed ye for your feyther's sake; and yet I canna but think ye had best kooned naught concerning him."

And she took him in her strong arms, tossed him upon her shoulder, and walked home with Peleg.

That night the latter got out his heavy cape, his stout cane, laid them on the table close at hand, and made no movement bedward. Madge watched him uneasily.

"Ye will never gang to watch wi' that woman for her uncanny sights," said she. "You canna be meaning that?"

"Indeed I shall, Madge. I am not afraid of my mistress, even if it is but her ghost, as the woman tells; I must find a meaning to all this."

"I shall gang with you, then," said Madge, resolutely; "who kens but I may find speech with the bairn's feyther. I maun gang wi' ye."

"But Little Malcolm," objected Peleg. "He is in a bonny sleep, and will nae waken till the cocks crow. He will come to nae harm. For this one night I maun leave him to see his feyther."

"Come, then," said Peleg.

And towards midnight the pair went out into the starlight, and took their swift and silent way towards Arlington House. Not a soul was to be seen, scarcely a sound was heard on the road, but in the upper stories of the great mansion there were still lights.

The guests had just retired, and the servants were released from their attendance. At the avenue gate, a dark figure started up from the shrubbery. Madge uttered a low cry, but Peleg Moss stepped forward promptly.

"You are I have come, Miss West. Can we go in without disturbing anyone now, or must we wait a little longer?"

"I have left a side door unbarred. Who is with you?" she asked, in a whisper, shaking out her coarse shawl to free it from the damp and dust of the soil, where she had crouched.

Peleg remembered her as the fine lady in silks and laces, afraid to venture into any exposures, and marvelled at the change.

"The Scotswoman is with me," answered Peleg. "She would come, in spite of my advice."

"There is no harm in it. I will take her to see Mr. Raleigh, if she chooses. I should enjoy his stare of amazement."

"Will he be still awake?" questioned Madge, in a shrill whisper.

"Yes, it is very likely. He sits an hour or two over his wine and cigars before retiring. We may make him a visit together—the woman he cajoled so long with the promise of marriage, and the wife he really married without meaning it. How he will enjoy seeing us," and she laughed disdainfully, then a moment after, added: "Perhaps Miss Arlington will go with us. Oh, it is all I ask, to have Miss Arlington stand before him, with her pale face, and her ghostly menacing finger. Come, I will head the way. The west wing is little used, and we shall go in the dark. We are not likely to be molested, for Mrs. Davies keeps the servants away from it. Sometimes I think she has seen the ghost, and don't want the whole house frightened by it. Follow me swiftly and keep silence."

She turned as she spoke, and walked on before them, never pausing until they had gained the great door on the side of the west wing. It yielded noiselessly to her touch, and there was light enough from the great mullioned windows, to show them the outlines of her form as she glided up the stairs.

At a long dim corridor she paused, pointed to the deep niches hollowed in the wall for the statues of some grim old knights, and set the example by stepping into one herself. An hour passed dimly and drearily, and not a sound was heard, except the distant echo of doors closed in the main building. After that it seemed to the watchers that they could hear and count the beating of their hearts. The chimes of the great clock in the tower rung out for one, when suddenly Barbara West stroked out a warning arm to them, and shrank, cowering and trembling, into the niche.

A door beyond swung open without the slightest hint of noise, and a tall figure, with thin white folds falling around it, whether of some gauzy material, or of intangible air could not be determined in that dim, hazy light. It glided noiselessly past Barbara, and as it came closer, Peleg Moss saw plainly, by some singular illumination, which had no palpable explanation, the pale, but serene and tranquil face.

He dropped out into its pathway, and fell on his knees. Whether living being, or unquiet ghost, he was determined to have speech with it.

"Miss Arlington; dear, dear, Miss Cornelia," he cried, softly, the tears pouring over his withered cheeks.

Barbara had shrunk back, with her shaking hands clasped over her face.

The Scotswoman was also on her knees, saying her prayers with all the fervour of intense alarm; but

the old sexton stretched out his hand to catch at the flowing white, and cried again:

"Miss Arlington, speak to me!"

## CHAPTER XV.

It was a very sorrowful face which little Lucy Calderwood showed to Lieutenant Kirkwood the morning after their interview in the hall; and he, on his part, flushed intensely, when he saw her start of surprise, as she perceived him in his place at the breakfast-table. When they left it, in spite of Mr. Raleigh's manoeuvres, the young man walked up to her and said, in a low voice:

"Miss Calderwood, will you be good enough to grant me a few moments' conversation in private?"

Noel Calderwood, who had remained at Mr. Raleigh's suggestion, frowned angrily; but ventured no remonstrance after a second glance into his daughter's face. He read there that the poor girl had stooped herself to the needful sacrifice, and he was willing the obnoxious lover should be aware of it, hoping that it would hasten his departure, as, to their united surprise, his own and the host's coldness had not done.

Lucy bent her head in acquiescence, and led the way to the little ante-room.

When the door was closed, she turned her wistful face directly towards him.

"Oh, Roll, it is in vain for us to hope. I was wrong to give you encouragement," she faltered.

"What has happened?" asked he, anxiously. "It grieved me so to see by your face how unhappy you have been."

"You must give me up. You must cease to think of me, Roll. Alas! I cannot help it!"

"You find the sacrifice of the fortune too much?" said the young man, slowly.

"No, no. I would resign that with the most joyful heart; but there is another claim. Oh, Roll, don't ask me about it, but I must yield my own happiness to save my father's."

"To save him from what?"

"I cannot tell you, but it is dreadful, dreadful!"

"It is some trap they have set for you. Strange, strange that my ghostly vision hinted it! Lucy, promise me you will not commit yourself to this thing, until you are sure it is the best."

"There is no way, but I will wait a little," answered she; "before I give them my promise."

"I came to tell you why you found me here, and to explain something that happened to me last night. Lucy, you know she has Miss Arlington; is that picture of her in the gallery a faithful likeness?"

"An excellent one, except that she had sadder eyes."

"Then I have seen her, Lucy."

"Have seen Miss Arlington? Why do you jest with me, Roll?"

"I have seen Miss Arlington, or—don't tremble so—her spirit—her ghost if you will. She came to my bedside last night. I woke with a cold hand on my forehead, but ah! such a warm, tender kiss on my lips; and I found a woman, at least, a woman's shape, with a fair, sweet face, rather proud, but infinitely tender, bending over me. I heard a voice low, melodious, thrilling, 'Roll,' it said, 'do you not know me? I am Cornelia Arlington!'"

"You may believe my heart gave a bound; but somehow there was so much warmth and life in the face; the eyes were so luminous with love, I could not be so frightened as I thought I should be."

"Cornelia Arlington is dead," answered he, "how can she come here?"

"She comes to warn, to advise you!" returned the low, sighing tone. "Listen; you intend to leave here to-morrow morning; but you must not go? No matter if the heat be cold and distant, if Noel Calderwood frowns. I, Cornelia Arlington, bid you remain, if you would win Lucy! Remember to fulfil my bidding! You must not think this is a dream, which has no meaning! See! I shall stop your watch at half past one, and I shall hang upon the chain a ring, the servants can testify was on Cornelia Arlington's hand when they put her in the coffin."

"And then Lucy, the vision lifted its hands over my head in blessing and vanished. I did not go to sleep until I heard the tower-clock chime out for four. This morning, when I rose, my watch was stopped at half past one. And see, this ring was on my chain!"

He drew forth his watch, and showed it to her. Then he put into her hands a solid hoop, with a singular design for a shield,—a flower with half the petals gone,—a star lacking the majority of its points. Below was a burning ruby, surrounded with jet, instead of diamond or pearl.

Lucy turned paler than before, and caught her breath nervously.



"It was here, I say it myself on those beautiful white hands of hers in the coffin. O Rolf, what does it mean?"

"I cannot say, but you see I could not disobey the injunction. I have remained, despite your father's frown and Mr. Raleigh's ill-concealed repugnance. I cannot but have faith that I shall win you yet. Curiously enough, this morning's post brings me a letter from my father, charging me in the same fashion, owing to a mysterious vision he has had, commanding him to insist upon my staying here. It is a great mystery. Tell me Lucy, shall I remain?"

"What else should you do?" asked Lucy. "Oh, I wish Miss Arlingcourt would appear to me! I wish she would show me my duty. I should not be afraid—I should be thankful, grateful!"

"I think we may both of us take heart," said the young lieutenant, looking tenderly into the sweet, sad face. "Somehow, I cannot but believe some good angel watches over us."

Heaven send it may be so," said Lucy. "Oh, I shall pray for Miss Arlingcourt to come to me, it is so hard, so very hard to know one's duty in such bewildering troubles."

Rolf opened the door for her departure from the room, and smiled tranquilly to meet Reynold Raleigh's flashing eye from the opposite room.

"I hope you will not forget," Miss Calderwood," he said, calmly, and bowed his adieu.

Reynold Raleigh peered into her face anxiously, and was baffled, for he could not read its expression. For once, Lucy hid her emotions from his sight.

There was a haggard look on his own countenance. He also had had a vision the previous night—not a ghostly one. He could have borne that better than the startling apparition of Madge Ramsay, alive and well, standing on his chamber threshold.

His consternation and terror at the discovery of the legality of a marriage he had only meant for a pretence, was only equalled by his surprise at this proof, that the woman he believed sent long ago to her grave with a broken heart, was still in his way. Startlingly, terribly in his way. A perfect panic had fallen upon him. What if one of the servants caught an inkling of her story; if those sharp-eyed lawyers discovered anything?

There was but one course to pursue. He gave her fair words. He made many eager promises, and appointed an interview in the park on the following morning. He was waiting only to catch a glimpse of Lucy's face, when she came out from this interview, before setting forth to fulfil that agreement to meet her there.

He was troubled and restless, uncertain what course to pursue. If the woman would be tractable and reasonable, he meant her well. He would find her a comfortable home, provide well for her, and go now and then to see her.

If she would not—well, she must not stand in his way, that was all; and, thinking of the fierce look in her eyes, he set his teeth savagely. He put a small pocket-pistol in his pocket, taking care to select one which had no mark upon it for identification, also a phial, containing a white powder, and a little flask of wine, with a crystal cap which made a drinking-vessel. And then he set out.

Imagine his secret consternation and anger when, at a cross-path, he met old Mr. Sharpe, the ancient solicitor of the Arlingcourts, and the latter, with garulous satisfaction in finding a companion, kept step with him, for all his lameness, and would not be shaken off.

Reynold tramped over the roughest paths, in hopes to tire him out; was gloomy, taciturn, almost unavailing. All in vain.

"There isn't a finer park in the shire," said Mr. Sharpe, complacently. "It's a long time since I've been over it. I'm very glad of this chance, because there was a talk among the executors of thinning it out. It would be a shame, certainly."

"Confound him!" said Reynold Raleigh, under his breath. "Shall I have to kick him away to be rid of him? What business has he prowling about here?"

"It seems to me the park is suddenly become popular," said he, indignantly, as he perceived another figure leaning against the trunk of a large oak. "Is that another of the executors?"

"That gentleman? I'm sure I can't say. I don't recognize the person; but he is certainly a fine-looking gentleman."

As they came nearer, the stranger turned and looked at them attentively, and, while the head rose haughtily, a brilliant glow kindled in his fine eyes.

Reynold Raleigh, already chafing under his impatience of the lawyer's company, was ready to seize upon any pretext to vent his ill-humour.

"Well," said he, in a high and sneering voice, "it seems the park here is public property, and is getting to be a place of common resort. I wonder what pretence has called this person here. I do not think I

have the honour of his acquaintance. I hardly think he has received an invitation to Arlingcourt Rise from its master."

"Well were it for me and mine, Reynold Raleigh, if we had never been cursed with your acquaintance. It has brought little but misery to any who has been on terms of intimacy with your treacherous nature," answered a deep, musical voice.

"Vile insulter, who are you?" vociferated Reynold, half-crazed with these repeated irritations.

The stranger dropped the cloak from his shoulder, revealing a tall military figure, and pushed back the hat which shaded a fine commanding face.

"Reynold Raleigh," repeated he, sternly, "your hour of wicked triumph is over."

"Who are you?" vociferated Raleigh, with an angry sneer. "What is your name?"

"My name is Rolf Kirkwood. I am the husband of Cornelia Arlingcourt," returned the other, with becoming dignity. "Do you deny now my right to intrude upon the park of Arlingcourt Rise?"

Reynold started back, a deadly expression on his face, but he tried to show a bold front.

"You are an impostor," he said, contemptuously. "There was one Rolf Kirkwood, but he is dead long ago. He was lost at sea."

"No, he was not lost. He was saved, and so was his son, the son of Cornelia Arlingcourt, Mr. Raleigh. Do you understand the full meaning of my assertion?"

"It is false—it is an imposition! I shall resist such absurd claims," shouted back the incensed Raleigh in a hoarse voice.

"It does not matter much? What claim have you beyond mine?"

"I am the heir of Miss Arlingcourt's will," returned the other sullenly.

"But, my dear sir," put in Mr. Sharpe, blandly, "the will itself is set aside if there be a son living."

A muttered curse broke from the man's lips.

"But you are only the heir in case you are unmarried," pursued Rolf Kirkwood, sternly. "Man, man, why are you in the park now? You came to meet the poor wronged wife who has travelled all the way from Scotland, with her child, to find you. You dare not deny it."

Another imprecation.

"I will defy you all," shouted Raleigh. "I shall cling to my rights."

"I think there is a claim you can hardly dispute," continued Mr. Kirkwood, quietly. "There is someone waiting at the mansion yonder who may change your opinion."

"I know who you mean—the trumped-up heir. This story is got up to serve his purpose. He thinks he shall win Lucy so. But I tell you I will dispute the whole of it."

"Let us return to the house; this matter can be settled there," suggested the lawyer.

Reynold nodded and turned round sullenly. Mr. Kirkwood followed quietly.

## CHAPTER XVI

THE strange gentleman, who had called himself Rolf Kirkwood, and who was identical with Peleg Moss's evening visitor on that memorable night when Miss Arlingcourt's coffin was robbed of its silent inmate, led the way through the labyrinth of the park paths, and proceeded composedly, with the air of a man quite at home, to walk up the avenue and enter the great door at the side, which led directly to the family apartments.

Reynold Raleigh gnawed angrily at his lip, but a look he detected in the lawyer's eye made him restrain his violence while yet it was in his power. He only gave a cold sneer as the gentlemen threw open the door, and muttered:

"A very unbecoming person for a self-invited guest."

The latter person gave no heed, but passed on to the library, and though he who believed himself the master, gave a violent start to see all the executors of the will of Miss Arlingcourt, as well as the lawyers who managed the property, gathered there, with Peleg Moss, the sexton, and Noel Calderwood and his daughter, and Barbara West for a background, Mr. Kirkwood only bent his head in grave acknowledgment, as of a presence he expected.

"Well," said Mr. Raleigh, fiercely. "It seems I have quite a circle of visitors, without having bidden a single guest. Is it to be a dinner party or a funeral?"

"We have come on important business," explained the chief executor, rising from his seat. "Our attention has been called to the fact that the provisions of Miss Cornelia Arlingcourt's will have not been met."

Reynold Raleigh's lips twitched. His heart gave a spasmodic leap, but he managed to keep an appearance of decent composure.

"In what respect, sir? I mistrust some enemy has fabricated a trumped-up tale. I presume this person has been imposing upon you the same absurd falsehood as he has but now repeated to me. I assure you I shall resist to the last so preposterous a claim. If Miss Arlingcourt were married, why did she profess herself single?"

"It is not to Miss Arlingcourt's marriage we referred," returned that gentleman, with a slight smile.

Reynold Raleigh bit his lip again. He stood there in the centre of the room, bolt upright, with his arms folded. He turned round suddenly, and cast a swift, inquiring glance over the circle of faces.

Noel Calderwood, he read plainly, was in more perplexity and astonishment than himself. Sweet Lucy was pale, and a little frightened, though now and then she lifted her drooping eyes, and answered a glad, encouraging glance from the young lieutenant, who, sitting behind a high, carved screen, had escaped Mr. Raleigh's notice.

Another stab went through Mr. Raleigh's heart, vulnerable in that one tender spot. Foul! why had he neglected to hunt down this modish, some strippling! A lightning revelation swept across him, revealing who he was; a terrible conviction clashed like a blow upon his brain. He had lost her. He had lost the one woman he had really loved, among all whom he had coaxed, deceived, destroyed!

But there was another face which gave him what he believed a clue. That of the woman there in the corner, with her haggard cheeks, her hollow eyes, her thin, blue lips. What a glow of triumphant malice, of fierce joy, of gratified revenge, played over the wasted countenance, making it look like that of a lost spirit. There were others, beside Reynold Raleigh, who shuddered when they looked at Barbara West.

But a tide of fierce rage swept across him. He turned and shook his fist at her.

"I know now whose plottings have done this! That Jezebel sitting there mocking. Let her take care that I do not give that scraggy neck of hers to the hemp."

"Be silent, sir, unless you can use more becoming language," said the lawyer, indignantly. "We are here assembled to receive the proofs of an assertion sent to us, declaring that you had no right to accept the position given by Miss Arlingcourt's will to an unmarried person, because you are legally the husband of one Madge Ramsay, a native of Dunkirk, Scotland."

"It is a base lie!" thundered Reynold Raleigh, glowering fiercely around him.

Peleg Moss rose, but Barbara West was before him, and darting to a rear door, flung it open and drew in the Scotswoman and her little boy.

"Will you deny these, Reynold Raleigh?" demanded she, in that high, swift voice of hers. "Can your iron will change the laws of Scotland?"

He ground down an oath, and turned his back upon poor Madge.

"Nay, nay, Reynold, ye mean face the truth," said she, sorrowfully. "Ye spoke me fair that night and didna deny the false ways which won me frae happiness. Ye were to meet me in the park. There were our ears than mine heard the promise."

"Ay," vociferated Barbara, clapping her hands. "Peleg Moss heard, and I heard, and someone else heard."

"Will you give us the proofs?" said the lawyer, coldly.

Peleg Moss put a packet of papers into his hands: the testimony of one who had taken the part of a mock clergyman, but who, hearing the pair exchange vows, made the ceremony legal; the gift of a book of ballads with, "To my pretty wife," written on the blank leaf, and signed "Reynold"; receipts, drafts, showing that for a certain time he had provided for her maintenance. Enough in short to convince them all that the accusation could be sustained.

Noel Calderwood rose, with a flushing face.

"In this case," he said, "the whole property reverts to the other heir."

"It will not come to me," said his daughter, with sudden courage, "because—"

Noel turned towards her fiercely, but could not speak before Reynold Raleigh cried, sarcastically.

"You need not debate about the ownership yet. I have not relinquished my claim. I deny the whole of this infamous plot."

"Do you deny that my son, Rolf Arlingcourt Kirkwood, lieutenant in his majesty's service, has a better right than either of you?" asked Mr. Kirkwood, senior, in a stern voice.

"I do! fifty times over I deny it," thundered Reynold, fairly livid with rage and agitation.

"Then," said the other, calmly, "there must be another witness called, whose testimony shall be indisputable to you all."

He also walked to a rear door, was absent scarcely

a moment of time, and came back leading by the hand—Cornelia Arlingcourt!

Every one present started up, with varying expressions of astonishment and awe. Every one but the eldest of the executors, who smiled in grave satisfaction.

Reynold Raleigh staggered back, with protruding eyes, and shaking knees.

Noel Calderwood dropped back in his chair like a lump of lead, and began mopping with his handkerchief at his steaming forehead. Lucy stretched out her arms, then burst into tears, and hid her face on the young lieutenant's shoulder, who looked over to the pale, beautiful face of his mother with eyes ashine with holy, solemn joy.

Poor Peleg's face was wet with streaming tears, and his rough hands were clasped upwards to heaven in grateful adoration.

But Barbara West had dropped on her knees, was hiding her face in the folds of her dress, and muttering some low words, which no one understood.

"Miss Arlingcourt!" exclaimed one of the executors. "Alive! here, really and truly, in flesh as well as spirit!"

"It is truly so, Colonel Weatherfield, given back, as by a miracle, to live, I trust, a happier and better life. Rolf, my husband, explain to them how your tender love, your fortunate appearance, sent it seems by the very hand of providence, snatched me from the grasp of death, in the very tomb itself. Tell them how Barbara's strange potion sent me into that trance which was like death itself. How your warm lips, your reviving breath on my confined face started the electric current through my veins, and brought me back to this world, whose most common thing, the human breath, is yet the most profound mystery and miracle.

"Peleg, honest faithful Peg, your remorse may cease. It is half to you, I owe my release from the tomb. Come and touch the living hand which you did not fear even in ghostly guise.

"Lucy, dear sweet little Lucy, you have come out fairer and purer for this little ordeal. I shall not ask your pardon that I come to rob you of your right to Arlingcourt Rise. Here is the true heir. I am not afraid to leave your claim in his hand. Take her, my noble boy, she is worthy, and I give a mother's blessing to you both."

She lingered a moment in tender ecstasy over the youthful pair, and then, a grave shadow just shading the gladness of her eyes, she took a step farther, and laid her hand on the shoulder of the kneeling, cowering figure.

"Barbara," spoke the deep, pitying voice.

Miss West dropped the covering, and looked up with wild scared eyes.

"Barbara, you have indeed atoned by your remorse for the wrong you consented to do. You were haunted by your own guilty imagination. I never came to your bedside but once. Look up now, and hear me declare in the utmost sincerity that I have no resentment towards you; only the most sincere and profound compassion for your sufferings and your wrongs."

"Can you be so magnanimous, so angelic?" faltered Barbara West. "Oh, I will not deceive you! I know, I expected it was your death you would drink with that potion. I planned artfully the legend of the bottle, knowing it would be like you to try it. Can you forgive me now?"

"I can, poor Barbara! Your face tells the terrible expiation you have suffered. We will try to help you to find peace and rest for the remainder of your life. We will let this cruel man, whose wickedness has thus by heaven's providence come to nought, fade from our experience, our thoughts even, if possible."

She turned as she spoke, her pale, beautiful face growing stern and grand in its rebuking scorn.

"For you, Reynold Raleigh, we have but one word—knowing so well the hopelessness of any appeal to your calloused heart to seek repentance, to put away its wrong and sin! But one word, sir, from the mistress of Arlingcourt Rise—go!"

She extended her arm and pointed to the door.

The baffled, crestfallen, overwhelmed man had been feeling in his pocket. His fingers already clutched the flask of wine, he was searching for the powder. He had meant it should sweep the humble Scotsman out of his path. He was desperately thankful now to make through its means his own miserable exit from a world where he had staked the most precious gifts of life, his honour and integrity, for a gilded bubble, which had burst and left him only this—to go!

He went out slowly, stumbling and groping like a blind person. The last sight he caught of Arlingcourt Rise was the picture made by innocent Lucy, her hands clasped in young Rolf's, her shining eyes tenderly beaming back to his.

He did not stop to enter his room to take from it

a single article which had belonged to him, although there was much there of value. But went out, down the avenue, across the lodge pathway into the park. He made no pause until he reached the thickest shrubbery of the most retired portion. There he stopped, drew out the wine flask, and emptied into it the powder.

Then he found the pistol and stood eyeing them in gloomy despair, debating which would give him the most painless departure.

A hand timidly touching his shoulder made him turn suddenly.

Madge Ramsay, with her boy swung over her shoulder, was there, with a white, scared face, but a resolute gleam in her eyes.

"Let me alone. I am going as she bade me," he said, fiercely.

"Aye, ye may gang; but, Reynold, ye gang—where?"

He glared at her, and then shuddered.

"It is nae an endless sleep. The gude book tells ye that. Your ain heart speaks the lie to the thought. If ye canna bear pur sinful mortals' anger, what will ye do before the sinless One?"

Another shudder.

"If we lose our way and gang astray, do we fling ourselves into the first dyke? Would na it be wiser to turn and search patiently for the right way hame?" she pursued, earnestly.

"Reynold, ye maunna dare to die till ye ha'e repented o' your evil, and tried to be an honest man. Ye can find mony a helping hand."

"Whose?" asked he, scornfully.

"Mine; the pur Scotswoman's, who is the mither of your bairn. Gang wi' me back to some peaceful place, I ha'e no care whither, and let us try to be honest folks and rear the laddie to be a gude man. That will be something to lift the curse away when death comes; and ye canna but gang. I ha'e a little siller; I can earn mair. Try first, if it be not better to live, Reynold."

Reynold Raleigh stared at her in amazement.

"Would you really help me, Madge—would you forgive me?"

"Ye are the husband I chose—ye are the bairn's father," answered she, lowering her eyes.

He flung away the powder. He emptied out the balls from the pistol.

"Madge," said he, "it looks like a hopeless case, but I'll try."

At Arlingcourt Rise there was only peace and joy. Peace and joy even in Barbara West's passionate heart, though she knew her life was ebbing away, like the sands of the glass which stood beside the couch, on which they laid her the very day that young Rolf and Lucy were married.

The moment the masterly will had wrought its purpose, she sank away without the strength, or indeed the wish, to live. Mind or body, one of them must succumb, and it was best it should be the latter. Even Belinda Scott, who was triumphantly restored to her old place, could not retain any resentment against the frail, weak, but touchingly patient and gentle sufferer, and was seen more than once, wiping her eyes in a suspicious fashion, when the doctors, whom Miss Arlingcourt (as people would persist in calling her) had summoned, united in shaking their wise heads, and declaring that with the first frosts the frail life must loose its hold on earthly things.

For the rest, they were all happy. Peleg Moss, to be sure, rather resented the abrupt departure of his housekeeper; but Elipeth was jubilant over her return to the command, and, as she brought a rosy-cheeked niece who remained so long as the old man lived, the cottage did not suffer from the Scotswoman's absence. Before he was laid in the churchyard he had loved and tended so long, Peleg obtained news from Madge, and learned that she was living comfortably on a farm in Wales, with her husband, and Malcolm, growing up into a stout young fellow, which was as acceptable news at the great house as it was at the sexton's cottage.

Noel Calderwood was, of course, quite proud of his daughter's position, but he was not a very frequent visitor at her house, it was noticed. He stood a little in awe of Mrs. Kirkwood's clear, penetrating eyes, and in his son-in-law's presence, always had an uncomfortable remembrance of the opprobrious epithets he had once hurled at him. Nevertheless, he found the occasional cheque on the county bank very acceptable and convenient. And perhaps the little apothecary had quite as much reason as any other person, to exult and rejoice in the non-fulfilment of—Miss Arlingcourt's Will.

THE END.

A DECAYED YACHT.—The royal yacht, the Victoria and Albert, is in dock at Portsmouth, and will require repairs of a most extensive kind before she

can be made fit to receive her Majesty again. On opening her out, it was found that in many places she was so rotten that whole handfuls of her "bread and butter" planking could be removed with little or no effort; but as it will be cheaper to build her up than construct another yacht, particularly as she will be as good as new when she leaves the hands of the efficient body of men who now have charge of her, it has been decided that the necessary work shall be commenced forthwith.

INDIAN EXTERIOR FOR LORD CANNING.—The sombre colours of Westminster Abbey were relieved, the other day, by the presence of an Indian prince, dressed in his native costume, with his prime minister and attendants, who came for the purpose of strewing Lord Canning's grave with flowers. The servants bearing the trays containing the flowers, held aloft in Eastern fashion, were very picturesque. After expressing his deep love of Lord Canning and his grateful remembrance of his rule in India, the prince knelt and himself strewed with flowers the stone slab which covers the remains of Lord Canning, and also of his father, George Canning. The Dean pointed out the spot in which the monument is to be erected; a fact which was of much interest to the Indian strangers. After bending in prayer, the prince bent down and kissed the stone, followed in the reverent act by his retainers. This is perhaps the first act of Mahometan worship which the Abbey has seen within its walls.

#### QUININE.

UNDOUBTEDLY quinine must before long become very cheap, for it has not only been naturalised on the Neilgherries, but is found to flourish better still in British Sikkim, within a few miles of Darjeeling. The *Cinchona Calisaya*, far the best of all the varieties, has never thriven in Southern India, but it grows as well at Darjeeling as it does on its native Andes. Dr. Royle, who, some thirty years ago, first pronounced the Indian hills likely to be fit places for cinchona growing, and Mr. Markham, who managed (surprisingly, we fancy) to bring some plants from Peru, have both deserved well of their country. India will be a very different place for Europeans to live in from what it is now, if the bark becomes so plentiful as to place a really ample supply of quinine within everybody's reach. Without such a supply, even places like the Pulneys or Varabragiris (boar-mountains), in the Madras district—the last new thing in hills, and praised accordingly as something quite exceptional in climate—do not seem likely to form the sites of permanent European settlements. We (*Imperial Review*) may be able to master the climate better by-and-by; but, at present, fever on the hills is almost as great a drawback to permanent residence as heat in the plains.

INCREASE OF GAME IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.—In South Australia about a dozen rabbits were let loose in Barwon Park, belonging to a gentleman named Austin, a few years ago, and recently, in one year, 15,000 rabbits were killed on the estate. The partridges let loose failed to increase in numbers. The pheasants multiplied very slightly, owing to a want of cover; hares, likewise, did not do well; they do not appear to like the native grasses. The rabbits are not only very numerous, but very large. Kangaroos have increased to such an extent in the south-east of South Australia as to become a serious injury to the colony, as they starve out the sheep. The increase of the kangaroo has arisen from the destruction of the native dog and the decrease of the aborigines. A kangaroo league has been projected, for the purpose of extirpating the kangaroos, or to endeavour to make their skins a marketable commodity, so that it may be profitable to hunt the animals down, and thus keep their numbers within bounds.

MR. NICHOLS, in his "Literary Anecdotes," published in 1812, stated that the earliest advertisement with which he had met was in the seventh number of the *Impartial Intelligencer*, a newspaper started in the year 1649. The first of all advertisements, however, appeared in that which was also the first of all English periodicals, the *Weekly News* of Nathaniel Butter. On the last page of the number for the 1st of February, 1625, N.S., separated by a line from the ordinary text and printed in italic type, is the following paragraph:—"Here is this present day published an excellent Discourse concerning the match between our most Gracious and Mightie Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, and the Lady Henriette Maria, daughter to Henry the Fourth, late King of France, &c., Sister to Lewis the Thirteenth, now King of those Dominions: Manifesting the Royal Ancestors of both these famous Princes, and truly explaining the several interchanges of Marriages which hath bene between France and England: with the lively Picture of the Prince and the Lady cut in Braze."





[THE CORD AND THE SACK.]

## YU-LU.

## CHAPTER XX.

YU-LU looked up into the face of the prince as he spoke thus, and she knew that he was playing the hypocrite, that his words were false and that his heart was black, and yet she dared not tell him so. She only shuddered in his presence, and that she could not avoid, for his very breath seemed poisonous. At length, however, she was relieved of his company, for he arose, and having imprinted a kiss upon her brow, he turned and left the apartment, and in a moment more Lan returned.

"Lan!" exclaimed the maiden, starting towards the woman and clasping her hands, "you will at least be kind to me?"

"I hope so, my lady," returned Lan, gazing with surprise upon the sudden movement of the girl.

"Then tell me what has become of Paul Ardeen?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said the woman, speaking in a low tone, and at the same time casting her eyes furtively about her. "But you must not speak that name in this place. If the prince hears it he will be very angry."

"But have you not heard something of him?" pursued Yu-lu. "Do you know if he has recovered from the wound he received?"

"I know nothing about him," persisted Lan, "nothing at all. But I would advise you to let him rest, and trouble yourself no more about him."

"Alas! you never loved."

"If I could not love the prince better than a poor wandering fan-kwi, I should never wish to love."

"Fan-kwi!" repeated Yu-lu, starting with alarm.

"How do you know that?"

"Oh, he betrayed himself while he raved in prison."

"He! Then he is in a prison!" cried the maiden. "Ah, Lan, you know more than that. Tell me all—tell me what is to be his fate."

The woman had partly exposed herself, but she would tell no more, and Yu-lu was forced to feed upon her own imagination—and that imagination painted the picture in colours as terrible as the reality could possibly have been. She saw her lover in the power of a heartless, relentless, revengeful prince, and she felt sure that death would be his portion. After she had conjured up the fatal picture, she tried hard to dispel it, but it would not leave her. She had to entertain the terrible thought, now that she had once let it into her bosom, and it fastened her misery upon her with a firmer hold than ever. She forgot all about her own sufferings, and

while her heart beat with renewed agony, it was for one whom she loved better than herself.

When the morning dawned Paul had once more recovered his reason. He saw the first beams of the golden sun that came and danced upon the opposite wall, and, for the time, he felt invigorated and refreshed; but soon the full sense of his situation came back to him, and he leaned against the post of the grated door to commune with his grief. He was not then the Paul Ardeen of a week before. The flush of youthful health was gone—the blooming of his hopes had faded away—the flashing light of those dark eyes had departed, and the form that had been erect and noble was now bent and emaciated by torture and suffering. But all these symptoms gave but little index to the sharp pangs that dwelt in his heart. Man can bear physical pain, for he hopes 'twill not always last, but few are the souls that can bear that utter loneliness which succeeds the tearing away of what is loved and cherished. Oh, no man can know, but from bitter experience, the terrible sorrow of such a calamity. It is not the pain of a few nerves, or the twinging of sensitive muscles, but it is the utter tearing asunder of these subtle cords that bind the heart to joy and hope, it is the trampling down of all the green shoots of life, and the withering up of all its blossoms and flowers—it is the utter midnight of the soul—a midnight so deep and black that even hope itself flies shrieking away, and the wreck of earth is left only a shattered mass, with no compass or beacon to guide it through the drear darkness.

Such is the man who has lost the treasure of his soul's purest love, and such was Paul Ardeen. He groaned in the bitterness of his grief, and when he had groaned till he could groan no more he went back to his cot and sat down.

The time passed slowly away, and the youth ate all that was left of the food that had been brought him the day before; but he received no more. Twilight came, with its cool breath and misty shadows, but no sentinel had yet made his appearance at the door. Paul wanted no more food, but he began to feel the need of drink. All the water in the bottle was gone, and his lips and tongue were becoming parched and hot. He listened for the coming of a visitor, but he listened in vain. He remembered that his food came not on the day before until night, and so he still hoped he should not be forgotten; but it grew dark and still he was alone—night had fairly come, but no messenger had arrived.

It was now that new fears began to take possession of the ill-fated youth's mind; but these fears, dark as they were, lifted his heart up from the utter darkness into which it had fallen. These fears were

of death—and death was not so terrible as the fate he had been brooding over. He even hoped—it was a wild, strange hope, to be sure, and it came without his bidding—that he might die, and that Yu-lu might flee from earth at the same moment. Such a hope almost raised a smile upon his pale face, for it pointed its quivering finger towards heaven and reunion.

So passed the hours. Gradually the din and bustle of the great city died away—one after another the kite-suspended lanterns disappeared from the air, and at length the silence of midnight gathered its quiet influence about the place. Paul felt the bars of his door, and they were damp with the night dew. He gathered off the tiny drops with his tongue, and they refreshed him. They helped to allay his thirst, and his lips were not so parched as before.

After the torturing thirst had been partly stayed—Paul thought of sleep. He had reached the cot, and was just in the act of sitting down, when he heard footsteps upon the narrow walk that led towards his door. He started up and went towards the grating, and he saw the rays of a light flashing through the darkness. Soon afterwards his door was opened, and two men entered. One of them bore a lantern, and the other carried in his arms a coil of rope and a large hempen sack. They were both of them stout men, and Paul could see, by the very expression upon their countenances, that they had come for some stern purpose. He who carried the lantern set it down, and then turned towards the prisoner.

"Are you not tired of remaining here?" he asked, in a tone which possessed but little meaning.

"It is not very pleasant here," replied Paul, shuddering, as his eyes wandered instinctively to the cord and sack.

"So we thought," resumed the first speaker, "therefore we have come to take you away. You wouldn't have stayed here so long as you have, only you were weak, and we took pity on you."

"And whither do you mean to carry me?"

"Never mind. You shall see when we arrive at our journey's end."

"Has the prince sent you to me?"

"Very likely."

"And has he sent you to take away my life?"

"You are shrewd at guessing."

"Because I have good grounds upon which to make my surmises."

"Well, perhaps you have; but you needn't worry yourself. You will be taken good care of. Are you able to walk?"

"I think so."

"Then we will go. We will lead you, for it is quite dark, and you might not find your way alone."

"One moment," exclaimed Paul, as the man was about to take him by the arm. "Let me see the prince. Lead me to him, if it be only for one moment."

"We cannot do it, sir," returned the man, as he stooped down and picked up his lantern. "The prince is plunged into mourning, and he sees no one."

"Mourning!" repeated the youth.

"Yes. His wife is dead, and he mourns for her bitterly."

"Oh, how base the hypocrite is! And you serve the prince?"

"Yes."

"Then you serve the blackest villain that heaven ever suffered to live!"

"Beware, young man."

"Of what shall I beware? You say the Princess Niao is dead?"

"She is."

"And before heaven I will take my oath that she died by her husband's own hand. Oh, if you love virtue—if you would expose the blackest vice that ever darkened your city, then tell to your fellows the true character of the man you serve. For two years he had a defenceless maiden concealed away among the ruins of some distant temple, and thither he has gone every month to visit her. She was beautiful, and he wished to make her his wife. But yet he had a wife living. The living wife must die to make way for one younger and more beautiful! It was for attempting to liberate the poor maiden from his fell power that I am suffering. But she is once more in his grasp—even now in his palace—and Niao has died to give her room in his arms! Go tell the people the true character of their prince, and let them know that blackness dwells in his heart."

Both the men had once or twice made a movement as though they would have stopped the youth from speaking, but still had suffered him to go on, for they seemed curious to know what he would say. When he ceased speaking they regarded each other for some moments in silence. At length he with the rope and sack asked:

"Do you know where the prince kept this girl?"

"Yes," returned Paul. "It was in a secret place beneath the old temples of Fou-ting-yo."

The men looked at each other again, and then the one with the lantern spoke:

"Who guarded the place?"

"An eunuch named Fan-king, and a woman named Lan."

The men regarded each other again, and quick glances of intelligence passed between them.

"You will tell this to the people?" said Paul.

"When we are tired of life we'll tell it," said one of them, with a meaning motion of his head; "but as long as we wish to live I think we had better keep it to ourselves. By the great joss, my young fellow, that's a dangerous secret for a man to hold. But come, you must go with us now."

"Whither?" asked Paul, starting, as the dread idea came back to him.

"You shall see."

The men took him, one by each arm, and led him out from the cell. It was a narrow gallery upon which they now stood, and was guarded upon the outside by a low railing. Along this the men led the prisoner, and when they stopped, it was before a strong door, which seemed to open into the main part of the prison. Through this they passed, and then Paul found himself in a high, vaulted apartment, from the arched roof of which hung a single lantern. By a rough, altar-like structure, which was built on one side of the apartment, stood two men. One of them was habited in the garb of a mandarin, and the other in the dark robes of a Buddhist priest.

The men who led our hero stopped before this altar, and the mandarin stepped down towards them. He gazed upon the youth for some moments, in silence.

"Young man," he at length said, "it grieves me to be obliged to perform the duty which a mighty power has imposed upon me."

"If it be a duty which refers to me," quickly returned Paul, utterly disgusted with what he knew was heartless, fulsome eunuchism. "I beg that you will do it with as few words as possible."

The mandarin seemed for the moment to be non-plussed by this, but he soon recovered himself, and, in a tone of unmistakable chagrin, he resumed:

"There is a charge resting upon your shoulders which leads you to death. Your last hour on earth has come, and I hope you realise how richly you merit the fate. It only remains for me to vest the authority in these men who lead you, and they are now instructed to do with you as they have been

directed. But before you die, you have the chance to ask the great Buddha to take your soul to himself and carry it to the skies. This priest will speak for you."

"I want nothing of your priest, nor of your Buddha," bitterly exclaimed the youth.

The bonze struck his hands upon his breast with holy horror, and the mandarin went back to the altar.

"In the God of justice and truth I have placed my trust," continued Paul, "and to him alone will I look for help. I ask none of your prayers nor any of your sympathy, for the one is heartless, and the other is false. I know my fate, and I am prepared."

The mandarin and the bonze were not a little surprised at the youth's manner, and after gazing upon him for some moments, they turned and conversed together in low, inaudible tones. At length the former turned towards the man who held the lantern and handed him a small piece of parchment. Paul could see that the parchment bore written characters upon its face, and from one of the hieroglyphics which he noticed he made up his mind that it was a death-warrant!

"Come," said the fellow, as he rolled up the missive and placed it in his pocket, "we are ready now."

The mandarin went back and stood by the priest, and the two others conducted Paul from the place by a door nearly opposite to the one through which he had entered. This led to a kind of open porch, and at a short distance farther they came to a wide platform which was built out from the prison wall. Here they stopped. The youth looked over the edge of the platform, and he saw a smooth, black surface, in the still depths of which dwelt the images of the bright stars that twinkled overhead. It was water! In the distance he could see the tall buildings which flanked the opposite side of the wide canal, and from the absence of all vessels, he judged that this was not a place where interlopers were allowed to be. The cool air swept gracefully across his fevered brow, and the stars of heaven looked down smilingly upon him.

Paul Arden knew that he had been brought out here to die! He remembered the words which the juggler had spoken, and he looked around to see if there were any signs of his presence, but he saw none. Now that grim death stared him in the face, he began to look for succor. He tried to hope that Ye-fu-hi would keep his promise. He bent his ear to listen, but he could only hear the gentle ripple of the water as it struck upon the prison wall; beneath the platform upon which he stood. He felt that he was all alone with the men of death!

"We are ready," said the man with the lantern. He blew out the light as he spoke, and set the lantern down.

It was not dark, for the heavens were clear, and the starlight was undimmed. The other man threw down the sack, and then uncoiled the rope which he carried. It was in several pieces, and as he separated them he hung them about his own neck. Once Paul tried to break from the grasp that held him and leap into the water, but he could not. One of the men kept a strong hand upon him, and they were watchful for any such movement. Had the youth been strong he would have struggled even to death, but his muscles were weak and his nerves unstrung.

As soon as the cords were cleared, Paul's arms were placed behind him and plioned at the elbows. Then his ankles were lashed together, and next a strong cord was passed over his shoulders and from thence around the lashing of the feet, and this was drawn up until the chin and knees came together. The next movement was to take a heavy stone, which lay near at hand, and place it in the sack, then the mouth of the capacious sack was held open by one of the men, while the other seized the bound youth and lifted him up in his arms.

"Oh, for the love of heaven," groaned Paul, "have mercy on me! Kill me at once, but doom me not to such a death!"

But neither of the executioners spoke. They forced the prisoner into the sack, and then began to tie up the mouth. With one last effort, Paul cast his eyes up, and he saw the bright stars looking down upon him. He caught the last breath of heaven's pure air—he heard the last ripple of the element that was waiting to receive him, and then the mouth of the sack was closed. He heard the grating of the cord as it was drawn tight and tied, and then he felt himself moved along upon the plank. There was a moment's pause—then came the cold, dark chill of the watery grave!

#### CHAPTER XXI.

ON the last evening that Paul Arden spent in his prison Yu-lu sat in the chamber which had been assigned to her use in the palace. She was not so utterly miserable as when he saw her last, for she

had been praying for strength to support her, and she had, in a measure, succeeded. The hours she had passed with Paul Arden seemed more like a dream to her now than a reality, but she could not but grieve that she had awakened from it. She never expected to see Paul again, and she feared that he even now might be dead. There was one other thing besides prayer that made her calm, and that was the hope of rejoining Paul in heaven. She sat there upon a broad, soft couch, and near her sat her constant guardian, Lan. The apartment was only lighted by a single lamp, so that objects in the distance were somewhat obscure.

At length the door was opened and a female attendant entered the room, who informed the inmates that a priest was in waiting. The prince had engaged an old priest to converse with Yu-lu, to make her understand the enormity of the sin she had committed, and also to impress upon her mind a sense of the duty she owed to him as her lord and master. The prince himself dared not visit her much now, for his season of mourning had commenced, and he was surrounded by his sympathising court. But the priest took his place, and he had already gained considerably upon the maiden's confidence.

Shortly after the messenger withdrew, the priest entered. He was bent with age and infirmity, and it was with difficulty that he walked, even with the help of a stout staff. He motioned to Lan as he entered, and she at once withdrew, and after this he went and sat down by the maiden's side.

"How fares our sweet child this evening?" he asked, gazing most sharply and earnestly into her face.

Yu-lu gazed up into the old man's features and a strange shade passed over her face, but she quickly answered:

"I am not happy, good father."

"And yet you have everything that men call happiness. What more could you ask?"

"For what I call happiness—for that which I love I love nothing here."

"You speak plainly."

"Because I speak the truth."

"And yet, my child, your love must be very strange. If I mistake not, you love the youth who took you from the power of the prince. Is it not so?"

"Ay, father."

"He is not of our country—he is of foreign blood. Can you love him better than a prince of your own country?"

"So it is," murmured Yu-lu. "I found his heart pure and noble, and I loved him because I knew he loved me."

"But you will forget him now, my child."

The maiden bowed her head, and remained for some moments in silence. At length she spoke, and her words were very low and earnest.

"Most holy father," she said, "do not many of our people take their own lives?"

"Yes, Yu-lu."

"And do you think that a person can be happy hereafter who does it?"

"That must depend upon why it is done. Sometimes the most noble martyrs die in that way."

"But suppose life were a useless burden—suppose the future of earth were nothing but blackness and gloom—"

"Stop, child. You are now supposing an impossibility."

"No, no, I am not!" quickly cried the maiden. "Oh, heaven knows my own fate is all I have pictured. All is dark and drear, and sorrow alone lies before me on earth!"

"Then you never heard of God?"

"Of God?" murmured Yu-lu, looking wonderingly up.

"Aye—of that being who made us, and who holds us at his will. There may be such a thing yet as hope. You are young, and life is before you."

Yu-lu looked more searchingly into her companion's face, for there was something in his words that struck strangely upon her ears. She had never heard him speak so before. He had always spoken to her of the prince, and of the duty she owed to him, but never of God, and of hope yet to come. A few moments she gazed and then she tremblingly laid her hand upon his arm.

"Sir," she whispered, "you are not the same priest who has been here before."

"Ah! Did you think I was?" he replied.

"Most surely I did. But he spoke not as you speak. Yet you dress the same, and your board is similar."

"Yes, for the good old priest lent them both to me. He is a friend of mine. I saw him to-day, and he told me he was coming here this evening to see you, and, after much persuasion, I succeeded in gaining his permission to come in his place."

"But who are you?" said the maiden, slightly startled by this revelation.



"One who knows you well, and of whom you have often heard. But do not be alarmed."

"And who are you?"

"My name is Ye-fu-hi."

"The Juggler of Nankin!" exclaimed Yu-lu, starting with a strange emotion.

"Yes, my sweet child, and I have come here to serve you if I can."

How quickly the beam that bears the scales in which the human heart is placed can be turned. In an instant the maiden's confidence was given to the strange man by her side, and, as if by magic, she forgot all the mistrust she had fostered towards him. She was not "catching at straws" either, for she felt a wonderful degree of confidence in the juggler's power, and an innate voice whispered to her soul that she could fully trust him.

"Are you afraid to trust me?" he asked, after he had waited to witness the effect of the revelation.

"No, no! Oh, no!" she said, "for something tells me that you can help me."

"I could have helped you once before if you had not been frightened and fled from me; but I know not that I can blame you, for I am aware that many people who know me not shrink from my presence when they hear my name."

"I remember," murmured Yu-lu. "I remember it well. I had a companion then."

She hesitated, and trembled; but in a moment more she continued, though in a hasty tone:

"Paul Ardeen was with me then. Do you know where he is?"

"Yes."

"And does he live?"

"Yes."

"Oh, heaven be praised! He lives!"

She bowed her head and wept.

"Yes, he lives," added the juggler; "but he is in the power of the prince."

Yu-lu started up and seized the old man by the arm. Her tears had ceased flowing, and her eyes gleamed with a powerful light.

"You can help him, too," she said, speaking with the whole force of her devoted soul.

"I have promised him that I would try."

"Then you have seen him?"

"Yes; I visited him in his prison."

"And was he suffering much?"

"More on your account than on his own. Of his troubles he seemed to think but little; he only suffered because you were not safe."

"Oh, Paul, Paul!" ejaculated the maiden, clasping her hands and lifting her eyes towards heaven, "you shall not trust in a heart that can forget its lover! You will see him again; you will speak with him. Oh, tell him that even now I would joyfully give up life itself to save him; and tell him, too, that if he falls beneath the revenge of the wicked prince, I will soon join him in the world of spirits. You will tell him all this?"

"Yes, if I see him, and of that I think there is no doubt. I will surely tell him all that you have said. He, poor, silly fellow, would willingly die, I think, to save you, or to find you in the dim world beyond the grave, so I think I had better try and save you both; and, in order to do this, I must have your aid. Let the rest of our interview, for the present, be business, for I have not long to stop. Now, tell me, if you know, how long it is before the prince intends to marry you?"

"I cannot tell you that, though from what I have heard him say, I should think he meant to do it very soon. But what is the law on this subject?"

"Oh, there is no law that can govern Kong-ti, for I do not suppose that he means to have a public marriage at present. He will only make you legally his wife, and that he can do by acknowledgment as soon as he pleases. Do you think he will trouble you before two weeks have expired?"

"Oh, no; I do not think he will."

"Then you will have no trouble, for before that time I shall be here again. But if he should attempt to force you to the union you must find some way to overcome it."

"Oh, sir," said Yu-lu, her face all beaming with hope, "if you can promise me assistance at the end of two weeks, I will save myself until that time. I have some power yet. One word of love will bend the strong prince mightily, for I know that he is wild with his passion for me. He thinks it is true love."

"And what would you term it?" asked the juggler.

"A base, withering, blighting passion. It has its home in the senses, and not in the soul. It is a part of the body, and not of the spirit. It is a passion which destroys instead of saving; it works death instead of life, and misery instead of joy. It takes its life from the outward form of beauty, and when a few short years shall have shed their frosts upon that beauty, and caused it to fade with age, all the

love will be gone. Niso was beautiful once, and the prince loved her. She grew old, and he forgot his love, for he never loved but with the passion of the sensualist. Alas, poor Niso!"

The juggler gazed hard into the face of Yu-lu, and his dark eye sparkled with an intense fire. He stretched forth his hand and placed it upon her head, and in trembling accents he said:

"Sweet child, if I live you shall be saved. Have no fears—only remain free for two weeks. I shall see you again then—and then I can tell you more than at present. I had only feared that the prince would hasten this marriage. I must leave you now, or I may be discovered. Keep up a good heart and trust in heaven, for to its blessed care I leave you."

The old man turned and moved towards the door, but Yu-lu suddenly sprang towards him and caught him by the arm.

"You will save Paul!" she whispered.

"So you may hope," returned the juggler.

The maiden whispered her thanks, and having kissed the hand which she held, she allowed her strange visitor to depart.

Ye-fu-hi gathered the folds of his long robe about him, and having bent his tall form, and set his staff heavily upon the floor, he took his way out into the upper hall, and down the broad staircase. It was now late in the evening, and, as the lower hall was only lighted by a single lantern, the place was not wholly free from gloom. When the old man had gone about half-way down the stairs he heard a door open below, and instinctively he crouched away into the shade of the high parapet that guarded the outside of the stairway. He saw a man come out into the hall, whom he knew to be the prince, and he was followed by an old mandarin. They passed through the hall, went out into the upper court, and the juggler determined to follow them, for he had the best of reasons for wishing to gain as much knowledge as possible respecting the grandee's movements; so he glided down the stairs as quickly as he could, and on reaching the court, he saw the prince and the mandarin passing behind a clump of rose bushes that grew in front of a vine-covered arbour. He crouched softly up and listened, and he plainly heard them say:

"I have decided upon to-night," said the prince.

"Just as your highness pleases," responded the mandarin.

"Let it be at midnight, and be sure that it is done most secretly."

"It shall be as you say."

"Because," explained the prince, "if the English devils at Shanghai should know of it they might cause us trouble. Set the two most faithful men you have to do the work."

"I have just two such men as you need. They hear nothing and know nothing but their duty."

"It is well. Go now, and have the business progressing. Sack him in the prison chamber, and be sure that he has weight enough to keep him down. You understand?"

"Yes."

"Then here is the warrant; and now you may be off."

The mandarin walked towards the street, and the prince turned back into his own dwelling. The juggler waited until they had both gone from sight and hearing, and then he glided away from his hiding-place. He thanked heaven that he had learned the plan of the base prince, for now he could have a hand himself at shaping the finale of the dark plot.

(To be continued.)

## FLORIAN.

### CHAPTER XI.

ON the day following the arrival of the treasure at the Bandit's cave, Florian claimed one-third of the amount to distribute among the poor and needy of the city and its suburbs. Bayard would have preferred to be himself the almoner; but as the lieutenant had brought the means, it was deemed no more than just and right that he should enjoy the privilege of distributing that portion set apart for charitable purposes.

"It is not alone the enjoyment of the privilege I seek," said our hero; "but you should remember that it is upon my head that the price has been fixed, and I stand much in need of friends among the people. You have heard the word which our good Dardinel brings from the city. Heaven and earth are to be moved, if possible, to find Florian. I will go among them, and hear for myself the news of the day, and at the same time, I will carry to the suffering ones wherewith to purchase comfort."

But the youth would not claim all the pleasure for himself. Bayard and Timon should have enough to give them charitable employment; only he would take

the lead. How Timon felt at heart could not be determined; but Bayard, when once he had given his assent to the arrangement, took no more thought of opposition. He was frank and honourable in the matter, and when he yielded he did so with his whole heart.

Early in the day a goodly sum, in gold and silver, was counted out, and divided into three parcels, for Florian had planned to take Athos and Dardinel with him to help him in the work of distribution. This Athos was one of the oldest of the mountain band—the philosophical robber whose remarks to Dardinel we heard during the trial at arms.

"Good Corinna," said Florian, as the woman was engaged in putting a few delicate lines upon his face with her pencil, "I should like to ask you a question."

"You can ask as many as you please," she replied, standing back to observe the effect of the lines she had just made over the bridge of the nose.

"But will you give me a truthful answer?"

"I will not give you a false one."

"Corinna, what I would ask is this: What know you of my early life?"

The woman started, and looked up into the youth's face with amazement.

"In mercy's name, what put that idea into your mind?"

"It came there legitimately enough, Corinna. It has not been from any single speech of yours, but from numerous speeches. In the first place, when I told you that Bozaria was not my father, you were not surprised in the least. In fact, you tried to assume an interest which you did not feel. Next, when I told you that Bozaria had intimated that my parentage was not such as I would wish to rake out from the ashes of the past, you shook your head as one who had direct knowledge. I did not notice it particularly then, but I have called it to mind since. In the third place, when you were preparing me for the part of the dervish, and I spoke of what might be my fate should I be apprehended, you told me there was a power in my interest more potent than I imagined. Even that remark I did not regard as of any particular significance at the time, thinking you alluded to the good will of the poorer classes of the people. But when, on my return from my first adventure in my new capacity, you told me there was a star in the heavens not yet read by astrologers, the star, you said, of my nativity—when you told me this, I remembered these other things, and I believe they have some meaning. Corinna, what is it? What know you of the event of my nativity?"

The woman finished her work, and stood back to observe the result.

"There," she said, "I defy the ambassador either to recognise the bandit or the dervish in that face."

"Will you not answer me, Corinna?"

She smiled, as she replied:

"Not at present, Florian. You ask me altogether too much. I will not lie to you, and say that I know nothing; but I will be frank, and simply assure you, that, for the present, I have nothing to tell you."

"Corinna, if you know how heavily hangs this doubt upon my spirit,—"

"And if you knew how little cause you have for doubt," broke in the woman, "you would not let it hang there longer."

"Then you will not tell me?"

"I will watch over your interests, Florian, as though they were my own; and when the time comes for opening to you the record which I hold of the past, be sure I will do so freely and unasked."

The coming of Bayard put an end to the conversation.

"Upon my life," cried the chieftain, "our Corinna is verily a witch. She hath a marvellous faculty for changing the human face. As I live, she has not left a sign of your original self, my good Florian."

And Bayard did not exaggerate. Florian had assumed the garb of a Benedictine monk, the order then prevalent in the western church, and Corinna had so gathered up his flowing locks beneath a closely-fitting skull-cap, and changed his face with her paint-box and pencil; that even the closest observer would have failed to discover the hand of the artist. Athos and Dardinel had assumed the garb of hermits, and they made a very good pair, too. Though the Cenobites (those ascetics who organised themselves into congregations) and the Anchorites, or those who completely isolated themselves from their fellows, did not generally associate on very good terms, yet it was no uncommon thing, in these days, for hermits to seek shelter in the convents of the Cenobites, and also to travel with them from place to place. And, furthermore, a large number of Anchorites had lately arrived from Palermo, with two or three monks in company with them; so that this trio from the mountains would not be likely to attract especial notice in the city.

Towards the latter part of the day Florian and his companions reached the hamlet of St. Eustache, where were a score of families, the heads of which were peasants and vine-dressers. Most of these people were poor, and our hero knew that they had found it very difficult to pay the taxes which he had lately been called upon to contribute; and here he made his first distribution. Calling the chief men of the little village together, he gave into their hands such sums as he deemed proper, with instructions that they should be distributed according to the needs of the recipients. In the midst of the blessings which were showered upon the three holy men, our hero said:

"I think I can trust you with a secret. Know that the money which you have received has been sent unto you by him upon whose head the king has set a heavy price. Florian, the bandit of Syracuse, is your friend."

And that night the name of Florian was coupled with a prayer for blessing upon the lips of the humble cotters of St. Eustache. And surely the secret was safe; because were the king to know that they had received a portion of the treasure taken from the ambassador's ship, he would surely send his soldiers to take it back.

From St. Eustache the trio proceeded to another hamlet, nearer to the city, where more money was bestowed upon the suffering and the needy. And, as before, the recipients were informed that to Florian they owed their good fortune.

When the third hour of the night had arrived, Florian had distributed the greater part of the money he had brought with him, and he had been careful that they should know to whom they were indebted. He could not visit in person all who were to be the recipients of his bounty,—nor did he see a tenth part of them; but he knew that every penny would reach its proper destination; and he farthermore knew that a thousand glad hearts would respond with blessings upon the outlaw whom the king would destroy.

At a late hour Florian left his companions to wait for him, at one of the fountains near the centre of the city, while he sought his friend, Orlando, whom he had determined to visit. He knocked at the door of Orlando's house, and of the servant who answered the summons he demanded to see the master. He was conducted to the principal apartment, and ere long, Orlando presented himself. As was the custom of the times, the seeming monk saluted the host with a blessing, to which the latter responded with becoming reverence, at the same time offering him a seat; and when his visitor had accepted the same, he continued:

"I beg mercy at your hands, holy father. If you come for alms, know that I have none to bestow."

"How now, my son? I thought Orlando had money. He is certainly in receipt of goodly pay from the king."

"Aye," cried Orlando, bitterly; "and that same king, having paid out with one hand money for my salary, with the other hand draws it back for tribute."

"Is it truly so bad, my son?"

"Aye, father,—I am but speaking the truth. The taxes imposed upon us are becoming more and more burdensome every day. First, Tiberius sends to us a king, and nominates a senate of patricians; and we must be taxed to support them. And then, every year, an embassy is sent to collect taxes for the support of the grand court of the emperor at Constantinople. You, who have no part in these affairs, know nothing of the burden we bear."

"And why do you bear such burdens, my son?"

"How can we help it?"

"Can you not throw them off?"

"How?"

"That is for you to determine, my son. I should think there might be power enough in Sicily—"

"Hush, good father! I dare not listen to such speculations beneath my roof. Just now the king is on the watch for traitors, and the very walls of Syracuse have ears."

"Perhaps they have eyes, too," suggested the Benedictine.

"Aye—they have eyes."

"And if they are no sharper than yours, Orlando, they will never look very deeply into your secrets."

"Ha!—That voice!—That smile!—Florian!"

"Yes, my brother."

"Heaven bless you, dear Florian!—bless you, now and ever!"

And thus speaking, Orlando took his friend to his bosom, and embraced him with all the love and fervour of his generous heart.

By and by a flagon of wine was set before them, and the two friends entered into a full and free discussion of things which had happened, and of things which were likely to happen. First, Florian was forced to tell the story of his adventures among the

banditti, and he gave a detailed account of everything that had befallen him, save the meeting with Electa. That, for the present, he preferred to keep to himself.

"This day," said our hero, in conclusion, "has been devoted to a pious work. I have been seeking out the poor and needy, the sick and the distressed, and returning unto them the money which had been taken from them. In many instances I have given much more than had been paid in tribute; but it was only a fair and humane distribution of the staff of life."

"By heaven!" exclaimed Orlando, after a little meditation; "men may call you a robber, and an outlaw; and the king and the ambassador may set prices upon your head; but before heaven, I hold you to be a better man than them. But, dear Florian, others do not know you, as I know you. They do not know the deep feeling that moved you to the step you have taken; nor do they know what aims you have in view."

"But they shall know, Orlando. It will require time, but, in the end, I believe the right will triumph. The only way I saw open to a successful revolution was the way I have taken. I know that most of the banditti, when the proper time comes, will join with me in leading the people to strike for the liberties that have been taken from them. The work is already commenced. In all the hamlets I have this day visited, I shall henceforth be honoured and trusted; and when the time shall have arrived, in the which I can see the way open to a successful rising of the people, they will follow me with confidence."

"But, dear Florian, do you think what may happen ere that consummation can be reached? Alas! you are in more imminent danger than you imagine. Let me show you. This morning, I was ordered to report myself to the centurion; while he in turn reported to the general in command. To-morrow, at the third hour of the day, we are to be under arms, on the plain, every soldier in Syracuse—and thence the whole force is to proceed in quest of yourself, and your band. A hundred mountaineers—peasants, vine-dressers, hunters and goatherds—have been secured to serve as guides, and the mountains are to be searched, from Catalano to Piazso. My soul! I fear they will find you. I do not see how you can escape. And they will search for Bayard, too."

"I fear them not, Orlando. They will not find me."

"Then you will not return to the mountains?"

"Yes."

"Beware, Florian!"

"Fear not, dear Orlando. I know the character of our fastnesses, and be sure the soldiers of the king will not find them."

"But," suggested Orlando, "do you think of the amount of the reward which has been offered? Can you depend upon every man of Bayard's band? Have you no enemies there? Is it not possible that the men may be found, who, envying you your sudden advancement in the band, will be induced to betray you? How is it with the man Timon of whom you told me? Does he not smart under the signal and humiliating defeat he sustained at your hands?"

For a moment Florian hesitated.

"I know something of human nature," proceeded the host, "and I can, perhaps, see, from my distant place of observation, that which you do not see. The friendship of the many may blind you to the enmity of the few. Oh, my brother, I cannot bear the thought of your arrest. If you fall into the king's hands, no earthly power can save you. Not all the petitions of all the men of Syracuse would avail you."

"I understand you," said Florian, in a manner which proved the sincerity of his speech, "and I will take heed. I thank you for the information you have given me, and I shall doubtless derive profit therefrom. And now, my brother, I desire information upon another subject. You have been intimate at the house of Charon."

"I cry your mercy, Florian. Do not accuse me of friendship for that man!"

"I mean no such thing, Orlando. I only mean that you have been admitted to his house very often."

"I have, it is true."

"And you may have become acquainted with something of his family history?"

"Not much, Florian. I know that his wife fears him, and that his unkindness is slowly, but surely, wearing her life away."

Florian remarked that such information did not surprise him, and then he proceeded:

"Has Charon any children?"

"No—I think not."

"Do you know if he ever had any?"

"I never heard of any."

"And yet," said our hero, "he may have had a child—he may have had one years ago."

"Yes," admitted Orlando, "such a thing is possible. But why do you ask? Why are you so earnest in this matter?"

Florian reflected awhile, and finally said:

"Dear Orlando, I know I may trust you; and I will do so; but I charge you—that you say nothing of what I now shall tell you—that you breathe not a word of it to any human being."

Orlando promised, and thereupon Florian told him of Electa—told him how he had found her—told of her beauty, and of her goodness; and also told of the conversation he had held with her, relating to her memory of childhood—the recollection of the garden, the flowers, the statues, and the fountain—and then he told how he had found the very scene in Charon's garden which she had pictured.

"I cannot be mistaken," he said. "Everything is just as Electa described it in her story of the memory of that early time; and I am confident there is not another place like it in Syracuse."

"And what said the maiden when you told her of this?"

"I have not told her. I cannot, until I know more than I now do."

"Wait," said Orlando, pressing his hand upon his brow, while he meditated: "By and by he looked up, and added:

"I think I can now understand a thing which has puzzled me much. I have told you that I had no friendship for Charon; but for his wife, the noble lady Camilla, I have long entertained the most profound respect. She has been very kind to me, at times almost filling the place in my heart which my own mother occupied while living. And she has been very free when speaking to me of the trials that have been hers to endure."

"Once, when our conversation had turned upon the subject of her unhappiness, she let fall the remark, that the great sorrow of her life was one of which I had no knowledge. Then, observing that she had excited my curiosity, she folded her hands upon her bosom, and begged of me to ask no questions. She said the sorrow was long past—a thing of the years when I was but a prattling child—and she would not keep it in mind. Of course, I asked no questions. I could not do so after such a speech."

"It may have been a month after that, that lady Camilla and myself were walking in the garden. You must remember that she and my mother were like sisters. In fact, no two people could love each other more fondly and devotedly than did they; and as Camilla used very often to visit my mother, and as she was always exceedingly kind to me, when the great affliction came upon me, and I found myself an orphan, I sought the dear lady for sympathy and consolation. So you will understand how I came to be so intimate at Charon's palace. A month, I said, after the circumstance already related, I was walking with Camilla in the garden. I stopped to gather a bunch of flowers, while the lady walked on to an arbour, where she seated herself. As my sandals were very light I approached the arbour without disturbing her. She sat with her head bowed upon her hands, and I heard her thus exclaim: 'Oh! she would have been a woman now, and a blessed companion in these sad and gloomy hours.' She looked up and saw me, and very soon the smiles were once more beaming upon her handsome face."

"It may be, Florian, that this was in allusion to a child she had lost. It must have been so."

"You will see the lady again," said our hero; "and you can question her with propriety since you have this excuse. You must exercise your own judgment concerning how much you will tell her of Electa; only ascertain, if you can, if the maiden ever had a home beneath her roof. Will you do this?"

Orlando promised, and soon afterwards Florian arose to take his leave.

"Banish your fears on my account," pleaded the bandit. "I do not feel at all alarmed."

But Orlando could not be persuaded. His heart was heavy and sad, for the impression was strong within him, that he should next meet his friend a prisoner and in bonds.

## CHAPTER XII.

FLORIAN found Athos and Dardinel waiting for him, and as he approached the fountain he observed a number of men go away.

"They were only citizens," said Athos, in answer to his leader's question. "First, as we waited here two men came up and addressed us; one of whom offered us a shelter if we were standing here because we had no home. We told him we only waited for a holy companion, who had gone to visit two or three sick people. Both the men were communicative, and as they seemed inclined to tarry and converse, we offered no objection. Other passers-by



saw the assembly and stopped to hear what was going on, until, in the end, we had quite a congregation. And we gained much information, my master. Ye gods! do you know what huge measures the king is taking to apprehend you?"

"Yes," replied our hero. "You must remember that I have just come from one of the king's officers. He is acquainted with all the plans, and has given me the benefit of his knowledge. To-morrow the mountain will swarm with armed men; but I do not think they can find our retreat."

"Not without help," declared Athos. "You have seen enough to understand that. But suppose they should discover the outer passage. It is never left without a sentinel—never without two of them—and those two men could hold it against a thousand. No, no, Sir Florian, we have nothing to fear from the soldiers of the king; and then the guides whom he has employed will only make matters worse for those who depend upon them, for they are friends of ours—everyone of them."

It was now near midnight, and without farther delay the three bandits started on their return to the mountain, reaching the stronghold an hour before day. Florian's first step was to arouse Bayard, and acquaint him with the facts he had gathered while in the city, for it seemed necessary that spies should be at once sent out, as several companies of the king's troops were to start at an early hour. The chieftain listened attentively, and at the conclusion of his lieutenant's story, he went forth to arouse a few trusty men, whom he intended to send out to watch the movements of the enemy; and meanwhile Florian sought his couch, where his senses were soon locked in the embrace of a refreshing slumber; and he slept soundly and long—for the sun had been three hours up from its rest when he awoke.

During the forenoon the spies kept Bayard and Florian informed of what was going on outside the camp. The mountain was literally swarming with soldiers, some of whom had passed and repassed the southern entrance to the stronghold several times. Each detachment of men had a guide from among the honest and hard-working mountaineers; but the amount of information thus gained by the soldiers was of no practical value, save in so far as it enabled them to traverse those mountain paths, which were familiar to the feet of the hunter, without getting lost.

During the afternoon the men of the king tramped to and fro as in the forenoon, and when night came their camp-fires were lighted in the ravines upon the mountain side, giving a weird and ghostly appearance to the dark mass that loomed up from the broad plain against the sky. Sentinels were posted at every point where it was possible for man to turn from one path into another—that is, at every such point as had been discovered; and throughout the long watches of the night, twice in every hour, these sentinels passed the cry of "All is well!" The robbers heard them very plainly; and more than once did the thought occur to Bayard's men to sally forth and rob the tent of the Roman who commanded the expedition, for they knew where his tent had been pitched, and they believed they could purloin so much of its contents as pleased their fancy, without being detected; but they dared not do it without their chieftain's consent; and as they would be likely to get nothing to pay them for their trouble they knew such consent would not be given.

And where was Timon during all this time?

"No, no, Timon; I do not think it," said Thalia, to whom he had given his reason for not offering his counsel in the event of the coming of the soldiers.

But the old lieutenant shook his head, and moodily replied:

"It is as I say. This gay and gallant youth, with his pretty face and adroit manner, has completely captivated our gang, and I am set aside as of no account. It was not enough that all hands should laugh and jeer when I was overcome in the trial at arms—"

"No, no, Timon; the men did not jeer. They gave loud praise to the youth, I know; but they did not jeer at you."

"I say they did!" declared Timon, angrily; "and since that time I have been completely overlooked. Concerning the expedition against the imperial embassy, I was not even consulted; and when it came to dividing the spoils, this young interloper had almost entirely his own way. And look, too, and see him suffered to be the exclusive almoner among the people of the plain. I tell you he hath entirely alienated the hearts of our men from me."

"Hush, my husband. You do but afflict yourself without cause. I have as little reason to love this young man as you have; but my hatred of him shall not blind me to the truth."

"Nor does it blind me," said Timon. "I tell you Thalia, that fellow hath dropped down upon us like

a baleful star that has broken from its place and goes gloaming through the sky in a track of fire. Between me and our men he hath come with evil influence; and even the consideration of Bayard himself is somewhat affected. And, moreover, if we do not have a care, he will so affect the will of Electa that she will not become our chieftain's wife."

Thalia clenched her hands as her husband thus spoke, and her dark eyes flashed as though with living fire.

"Let him beware how he ventures upon such ground," she said, hissing like a serpent between her closed teeth. "And yet, Timon, I know there is danger. There will be danger if we delay. The marriage ceremony must be performed immediately."

"That is my opinion," added Timon. "And I say, let it be as soon as our chieftain will. Electa hath something of the spirit of honour in her bosom, and were she once the wife of Bayard, I think she would be true to him."

"It shall be very soon," resumed Thalia, decisively; "for I know that Bayard is ready, and even anxious. The bond we set is passed, and there is no more reason for delay. We have only put it off thus far to please Electa; but we might do so to the end of time, and she would be pleased no more. She seeks to avoid the union, but that is out of the question entirely. I will see that the arrangements are made, and in the meantime do you dismiss these unjust suspicions against the love and respect of your old companions in arms. They may be for the time pleased with the comely and adventurous youth; but they will not forget you."

And still Timon shook his head. He had allowed himself to feel that his companions had slighted him, and the iron had entered his soul. When he was left alone he breathed curses against the whole troop, but especially were they directed against Florian.

"I shall know no peace while that man is here," he muttered, to himself. "And, moreover," he added smiting his hands together, "I do not believe he is here for any good. Bayard must be blind not to see. Why should he demand of us that he shall be called upon to rob only a given class, of which he is to judge? Why does he claim exemption from a work which all the rest of us must engage in? Cannot Bayard see that the spirit of discord will soon creep into our band? I can perceive it even now. By the gods! master Florian never came hither to be a true mountaineer; but he hath come to answer selfish ends."

After this, Timon took a few turns up and down the rocky chamber, and when he finally stopped there was a look upon his face from which even a satyr might have shrunk with dread. The thin lips were never compressed more wickedly, and the eyes never glowed more luridly, not with a bold, defiant light, but with a smouldering, hidden, phosphorescent glare, such as might glow in the eyes of the coward who had conceived a deadly pain.

"By the blood of my heart!" he hissed, "only evil can come of Florian's stay with our band; and the quicker he is out of it, the better will it be for every one of us. Let me but gain a provocation of seeming point and weight, and I will—"

He did not finish the sentence. Either he had not fully made up his mind, or he dared not give utterance to the thought entertained.

And where, while Timon was thus engaged, was the youth against whom his angry spirit had arrayed itself?

At the third hour of the night, by Bayard's order, Florian went out, in company with a guide, and visited the various points where the bandit sentinels had been posted, and having received their several reports, he returned with the information to his chief. As he entered the cavern he met Corinna, who whispered to him that she wished to speak with him as soon as he had seen Bayard. Accordingly, when he had made his report, he went out, and found the stewardess where he had left her.

"Good Corinna," he said, as soon as he had satisfied himself that they were unobserved, "I have been waiting for this. Do you summon me to tell me that I may see Electa?"

"Yes," replied Corinna, with a smile. But the smile quickly gave place to a serious look, as she continued: "At best, there is danger in every meeting between you and the maiden; for Thalia's suspicion is aroused, and she is on the watch continually; but I think we can escape her this time. Electa is in my apartment, and there you may see her; and meanwhile I can keep watch without. Follow me, and look to it that you are not observed. Should you chance to discover a prying eye, you must proceed directly to your apartment."

Thus speaking Corinna went in, and having taken a lamp from the table, passed to her chamber, which was in the opposite direction from those occupied by Bayard and his officers. Florian saw her disappear

behind a projecting mass of rock, and having assured himself that no one was near, he hastened on, and beyond the rock in question he saw Corinna's apartment. And he found Electa there, who, without heeding the presence of the third party, hastened forward, and pillowed her head upon his bosom.

"O! Florian, I have been very anxious. You will not deem it wrong that I am here. I could not forego this opportunity of seeing you—of speaking with you." She gazed up into his face with such a wondrous flood of love and trustfulness in her look, and seemed so entirely bound to him, heart and soul, resting upon his bosom as though heaven had given it to her for her own, that he was completely enraptured; and as he held her within his strong embrace, an emotion of ecstatic bliss thrilled through every fibre of his system, and had all the world been looking upon him at that moment, he could not have put her away. Corinna stood back and gazed upon the scene, and ere she knew it, tears were glistening upon her cheeks. She started towards the entrance, wiping her eyes with a corner of her mantle as she did so; but she stopped ere she had reached it, and spoke to Florian as follows—the words seeming to be drawn forth by a power which she could not resist:

"Florian, as I look for a better world than this, when the sleep of death shall come, I say unto you—The love of that girl is pure and true. Her whole heart is yours, and while life is spared to her she will be faithful and devoted. Oh! will you be the same? Will you hold her always to your bosom as now? When the hand of time has touched her beauty to mar it, and the silver of age is sprinkled in her glossy tresses—if you live to see it, will you cherish her then as you do now in the season of her beauty's perfection?"

Florian did not make a hasty answer; but returning Corinna's gaze with a look of calm and solemn truthfulness, he said:

"Heaven knows what is in my heart; and may He, in the final day, do unto me as I shall do unto my beloved!"

(To be continued.)

## MICHEL-DEVER.

### CHAPTER LXVII.

THE early part of the voyage had proved very tempestuous—the ship in which Claire sailed had left port with a favouring breeze, but was caught in a storm, and so disabled that she lay at the mercy of the waves, in danger of going down with every soul on board. The passengers preferred clinging to the wreck, as long as there was safety in doing so, to trusting themselves upon the treacherous ocean in open boats.

They watched and hoped that some vessel would cross their track, that could release them from their perilous position, and, at last, one appeared on the horizon. Signals of distress were made, and after an hour of breathless suspense they were seen and responded to. By this time the storm had subsided, and a ship bore down upon them and rescued the passengers and crew, leaving the unfortunate Vesta to her fate.

Among the passengers that crowded the deck of the Britannia, Claire found two friends with whom she had been intimately associated at Baden during the previous summer, and who had subsequently visited her in Paris.

Mrs. Stanley and her brother, Robert Orme, both acknowledged that to their acquaintance with Madame L'Epine they owed the most agreeable recollections of their tour. Their surprise and delight at recognizing her may be imagined, though Claire was by no means gratified by the encounter, much as she really liked them both. They eagerly offered her every attention, and during the remainder of the voyage, she was compelled to come out of her dreams, and play the part expected of her by these admiring friends. Thenceforward the weather was delightful, and Claire had no excuse for confining herself to her state-room, for she was never sea-sick.

Madame L'Epine stood apart from the others, but she was not alone. Presently a gentleman who had been gaily conversing with a group of ladies, left them, and drew near her.

This was Mr. Orme, who had fallen madly in love with Claire, and he now sought an opportunity to win her. She tried to avoid his wooing, but finding it impossible, she at last frankly stated her situation and her intentions to him, adding:

"The bond that binds me to my husband is not less indissoluble, even if it has been pronounced void by the decrees of man. I hold firmly to the belief that those whom heaven hath joined together, no merely human tribunal can put asunder. I am not what is called a pious woman. I am afraid that I am not a good one; but that belief is mine, and my actions will

be governed by it. After this assurance, I hope that you will withdraw your attentions, and allow me to go on my way unmolested."

Orme silently regarded her a few moments, and then said:

"Have you, indeed, crossed the Atlantic to seek that recreant husband, madam? for recreant he must have been to relinquish so fair and enchanting a being as you are. The fault must have been in him, not in you, for I find you a gem without flaw—peerless—resplendent."

Claire laughed bitterly:

"This is a strange conversation to hold here, and at this time; but nobody is minding us, and we may speak as we please. He shall yet find me all that you think me—aye, and more, too. It is to win him back that I have come hither. When he cast me off I was a child; I had little education; nothing, nothing, but the fair outside semblance that fascinated him, and the passionate heart that found in him its ideal. I thought he loved me, and I—Well, those days have long since passed away, and I will not refer to them; but I have bided my time; I have gained the culture he taunted me with not possessing. I have given up my life to one idea—all that I am I have made myself, that in time I might bring retribution to the man who so bitterly wronged me. I tell you this, that you may cease to hope for a return to the love you have offered me."

"But of what nature is this retribution? I do not see what you can do?"

Again her mocking laugh rang out:

"I do not mind telling you, in this last confidential interview we shall probably ever hold with each other, for we shall soon part, and go on our different ways. I shall again find the man that cast me off; make him adore me; win back all the love he once professed for me, and then—then I will measure back the bitterness he has poured into my life, drop by drop, till it poisons every spring of joy or happiness in his nature. Only thus can I cancel the measure of my wrongs."

Orme looked into her face and shuddered, but still it was beautiful and attractive to him, though the spirit of a baffled tigress seemed suddenly kindled into life, gleaming in her hazel orbs, quivering in her mobile lips. He gently said:

"It would be better for your happiness to accept what I can give you, than to pursue so bitter a purpose as that. But I can urge you no farther, Madame L'Epine. In the future, I hope that you will find no cause to regret the course you seem determined to pursue."

"If I do, no one shall ever know it. Sufficient to myself will I still be. You understand now why I can be nothing to you, Mr. Orme, and when we part, I hope that you will make no effort to trace my steps. The name I bear is a travesty of the one to which I am entitled; that has not assuaged my lip for years, but I did not relinquish my right to bear it in some shape, though my husband repudiated the tie that bound him to me."

An expression of startled amazement came across the face of Orme, and he bent forward and peered into the face of Claire. With repressed excitement, he exclaimed:

"Heavens! can it be so? Have I known you so long and so well, without recognizing in you the divorced wife of Walter Thorne? I see it all now—you have but translated his name into another language, yet dullard that I have been, the similarity never struck me before. You are Claire Lapiere, and if I could atone for the wrong I helped to consummate against you, a heavy load would be lifted from my conscience."

His agitation was extreme, and every shade of his rufous complexion faded into a dull pallor. Claire regarded him with extreme surprise, mingled with annoyance. She haughtily said:

"I will not deny my identity, but I had hoped to maintain my *incognito* till I revealed myself, in my own time, to those I wish to know me. I shall be glad to understand the meaning of your words, Mr. Orme, for what connection you can have had with my past life is a mystery to me."

"It would not have been had I borne the name that was mine in my youth. I married Catherine Orme, and by the will of her father, I assumed her name when we took possession of the estate. My own is Robert Wingate, and you may remember when and where you have seen that name, written at the close of a letter sent to Thorne to show to your father. I can only say in my own defence, that if I had suspected that Walter meant to act unfairly by you, I would never have lent my aid to him in so questionable a manner. But he had served me in many ways, and I was willing to help him to evade the tyranny of his father. Besides, I was a little in love with the girl the old man made him marry after he gave you up. I tried to aid you in that shameful suit for a divorce, but the power of

Colonel Thorne rendered all my efforts abortive. Ada Digby may have told you of the struggle I made in your behalf, for I felt as if guilty of a portion of the wrong that had been done to you, and since this day the verdict was given, I have held no intercourse with Walter."

He spoke rapidly, as if afraid that his courage might fail him if he did not make his confession at once.

There was a flash from the dark eyes of the listener, and for an instant she withdrew from his side; but after a pause for reflection, she returned to her former position, and earnestly said:—

"I remember all that you refer to; and the attempt to serve me when I so sorely needed a friend gives you a claim to my forgiveness for the previous wrong. Yet you owe me reparation, Mr. Orme, and it is in your power to aid me to attain the retribution I have vowed to bring home to your former friend."

"In what way? I will prove the sincerity of my repentance by doing anything that is reasonable; that a gentleman may do. I owe Thorne some return, also, for marrying the girl I believe I could have made happy, and treating her afterwards with the most shameless and heartless neglect."

"Then we can come to an understanding, but not here. At the hotel where we can converse in private, I will unfold to you the service I require at your hands."

He bowed, and after a pause, said:

"I understand all now, and I shall no longer persecute you with professions of attachment. I had hoped to find in you a cherished mistress for my desolate home; a guide and companion for my two motherless daughters, but now I see plainly that it is impossible."

"I a stepmother! Heaven forbid!—at least, to your children, for I wish them a better fate."

"Yet, if I understand you, you intend to renew your former relations with Thorne, after winning him anew, and you must be aware that he has a daughter."

"I knew it, certainly, but I have thought of her scarcely at all. What part she will play in the drama I intend to enact is of little importance. I may make use of her; if I can set her in opposition to her father; if I cannot do that, I shall set myself against both, and triumph over them. Can you tell me anything of this young girl?"

"Very little. She has lived at Thornhill in seclusion with her invalid mother. I only know that her father has little affection for her, and he is not a man to care much for the happiness of those dependent upon him."

"So much the better; I shall easily induce her to take side with me."

"But what do you propose to do, madam?"

"Wait and see: and, above all, preserve the secret of my identity. I shall unveil to you a part of my programme this evening—the rest time will develop. I have waited seventeen years for the death of my rival, and now that fate has placed in my hands the power to act, I shall wring from that false man's heart such atonement as my wrongs deserve. Have no fears for his life—I do not strike at that, for I would have him live to suffer as I have suffered."

"Of course your secret is safe with me; but you are undertaking that, which will end in wretchedness to yourself, as to your victim. Thorne may merit all that you can inflict on him, but you will sacrifice much in obtaining your vengeance. I shall see you safe to your hotel; that is, if you insist on going to one, in place of accepting my sister's invitation to spend a few weeks with her."

"I thank Mrs. Stanley very much for her wish to retain me with her a little while, but I have very urgent reasons for declining to remain longer than is absolutely necessary. My destiny calls me elsewhere, and I must follow its beckoning finger, even if it lead me to wretchedness and repentance."

Her voice softened a little, and Orme hastened to say:

"If you would only stay among us a few weeks, you might be induced to take a different view of your position. Such a woman as you should not throw away her fairest chances in life to follow up a chimera. After what you have said, it seems madness in me to wish to marry you, but I do—I do most ardently. I would take you to my heart, and use every device known to the tenderest affection to make you forget the dream that you have nourished till it has overshadowed your true, womanly heart, and caused evil to spring up in your nature that is not native to it."

Claire deeply shook her head.

"It would be the worst mistake you ever made. One that would seal your own wretchedness, for I can make no home happy. In society, you have seen me gay, brilliant, charming, perhaps; but in the seclusion of home it is far different. There, I am sad, bleeding, dreaming over of the task I have sworn to

accomplish—which has lain as an incubus upon my life for seventeen long years."

"Your decision is irrevocable, then?"

"Yes, happily for you, it is. I shall be glad to have your escort to the hotel, and I will then show you in what way you can serve me. But when we part there you must seek me no more. Such business as we may hereafter have with each other can be settled by letter."

Orme bowed, and his sister, a stylish-looking woman, still young and handsome, came up to them, followed by her two children, a boy and girl, of six and eight years of age, who were much attached to Claire.

Claire stooped and kissed the little girl. The boy put his mouth up for a similar caress, which was promptly given, and, with an hysterical laugh, she said:

"I wonder why I love children so much. It is the one soft spot left in my heart, and these little ones have found the warmest place there. I shall miss my pets very sorely, but I must submit to give them up, as I have submitted to so many other things that were hard to bear. Auntie cannot go with you my dears, but she is sorry to part from you, perhaps forever."

"What for?" asked the girl. "Mamma wants you to stay with her, and so does Uncle Robert too, I know," and she clung fondly to the hand she had taken.

Mr. Orme saw that Claire was distressed, and he drew the child away. The scene was ended by the approach of the ship to the pier, and a sudden rush of the passengers towards the landward side.

Half an hour later their adieux had been said, and two carriages were moving out of the crowd of vehicles near the place of landing. In one of them was Mrs. Stanley and her children, with their nurse; in the other was Claire and Mr. Orme.

He had wisely determined to say nothing more to her on the subject of his love, but when he looked on her enchanting face, listened to the music of her voice, and thought it might be for the last time, his resolution suddenly failed him. He took her hand and passionately said:

"Claire, be mine—I entreat, I implore that you will not sacrifice yourself to an idea of vengeance on a man who is unworthy to inspire you with any emotion save contempt. I will gain from Rome itself freedom from the imaginary shackles that bind you to him. Can you not see that in pursuing the course you have marked out for yourself you will seal your own misery in this world—your condemnation in the next? To accomplish what you propose to yourself, you must harden your own heart, stifle every tender and generous feeling, and become what I shrink from thinking of. Oh! for heaven's sake, if not for mine, or for your own, think of what you may become, and recoil from the future evils you are ready to embrace."

She coldly withdrew her hand, and defiantly said:

"If life be granted me, I will walk on in the course I have marked out for myself, and nothing shall turn me from it. I have waited years for the opportunity, and now, when every obstacle is cleared from my path, I will not shrink from what I have so long contemplated. If I loved you, Mr. Orme, my answer would still be the same; but, thank heaven! my heart is dead to that passion. It cherishes but unobscured desire—what that is you already know."

"Then your decision is irrevocable?"

"As irrevocable as the laws that govern nature. Assuredly as the sun will rise to-morrow, so surely will I do what I have set my heart upon. Say no more, I entreat—nay, I command, for you are talking of love to a woman who believes that she is bound by ties that nothing save death may dissolve. The church cannot loose the bonds that were forged in the name of one in heaven."

"Tell me one thing, Claire—do you love this man to whom you are ready to surrender the control of your life? Unless you do, I cannot understand why you so persistently have held to your heart the hope of a re-union with him."

"Love him!" she scornfully repeated. "Do you know so little of the human heart as to ask me that? Words could never convey to you an idea of the depths of contempt into which he has fallen in my estimation. If I loved him, I would shun him as a pestilence, but feeling as I do towards Walter Thorne, I shall become the minister of dire retribution to him. Do not tell me that I shall become hard, harsh, and cold in doing this. I am all that now, and his baseness, his cruelty have made me what I am. I am unfit to accept the offering of your love, for in spite of your faults you have much that is noble and true in your nature, and you are far too good a man to be victimised by me. Go on your way, Robert Orme, and thank your good angel that Claire L'Epine refuses to accept the heart and home you offer her."



She turned from him, folded her veil over her face, and he felt that farther remonstrance would be useless. After a pause that was very painful to Orme, he said:

"Since you deny me a near and dear interest in your fate, will you make clear to me in what way I shall be called upon to assist your plans?"

"It is as well, or better perhaps, to do that before we reach the hotel," she wearily replied. "I hold a bond for a very large sum against Walter Thorne. I wish to transfer it to you that you may demand its payment, but not until I write and tell you when to act."

"But to what purpose? If you intend to marry him again, you surely will not wish his fortune to be injured."

"I shall be re-united to him—I will give him one month of devotion such as he lavished on me in our first union; and then—I will leave him to feel all the anguish of being forsaken by one he trusts. I will have his wealth taken from him, and, for a season, permit him to taste the poverty to which he left me when he cast me off. It was not his fault that I did not suffer for the means of living. His father offered me an annuity, which I rejected, but I never heard that Walter made any attempt to provide in any way for me. I should have accepted nothing from him, it is true, but that does not lessen my resentment that I was cared so little for as to leave me dependent on others, without an effort on his part to induce me to take from him enough to raise me above want. I went to France with my god-mother, was educated at her expense, and afterwards was taken under the protection of my half-brother, of whom you already know something."

"But if I consent to act as your agent, what use will you make of this money, and how came the bond in your possession?"

"As a matter of justice, I shall provide for Walter Thorne's daughter out of the sum you will receive, for a gambler is not likely to have much to bestow on those he should care for. The money was lost at the gaming table, and the son of my god-mother was the winner. Andrew Courtney rarely plays, but he did so when he met my false husband, that he might place in my hands a weapon to be used against him. I have held it for more than three years, and it would never have been used if his last wife had lived. Her death placed him at my mercy, and I intend to use the power that is in my hands. I shall not utterly impoverish him—let that assurance suffice. When we reach the hotel I will give you the bond, with such directions as are necessary."

Orme rather reluctantly said:

"Since I have given you my promise, I will not draw back; but it seems to me that you are preparing too heavy a blow for Thorne, shamefully as he treated you. His father was a remorseless old tyrant, and but for the power he wielded over Walter through his dependence upon him, I believe he would have been true to you."

"It is too late to discuss that now—as he has sowed, he shall reap—that is the immutable law. You are bound to do me this service, for had it not been for the assistance you gave him to deceive my friends, I should never have been his wife. I demand from you such reparation as it is in your power to afford. Grant it without further remonstrance, for my course is irrevocably determined on."

Orme earnestly said:

"If you knew how bitterly I have repented of that act—how anxiously I have desired to atone for it, you would see how impossible it is to me to refuse any request you may make of me, however unreasonable it may seem. You are avenged, Claire, for I love you, and I must aid you to accomplish your own wretchedness."

The tones of his voice expressed even more than his words, but she calmly said:

"I thank you for your willingness to serve me in my own way. Seek a better woman than I am to make happy with the gift of your affections. When I am no longer near you, you will learn to forget me, for absence always conquers love."

As she ceased speaking, the carriage drew up at the private entrance to the hotel. In silence, Orme assisted Claire to alight, conducted her up stairs, and then went to secure an apartment for her. He soon returned, followed by a chambermaid, bearing the key of the room—which was across the corridor from the private parlour into which Claire had been shown. A porter brought up her luggage, and she said to her companion:

"Wait here a few moments, if you please, and I will bring you what I spoke of."

He bowed; and she went with the girl to her room. She unlocked her trunk, took from it a portfolio, and drew from one of its pockets the bond. An inkstand with a pen in it was upon the table, and she sat down, and wrote upon it the transfer to

Robert Orme. By this time the servants had gone away, and closing the door of the room, she went back to the one in which she had left Orme. He was standing by a window looking down the street, with a clouded and anxious expression.

As Claire came in he went forward to meet her—and they sat together on a sofa, earnestly talking, for several moments. With visible reluctance, Orme accepted the bond, and as he put it in his pocket-book, he said:

"Thorne will exonerate me as the agent of his ruin, though he will recognise you as its author, for in your name is the transfer made."

"He need know nothing beyond the fact that the obligation has passed into your hands. It is a debt of honour, and as such Walter Thorne will not repudiate it. Men have curious ideas on such subjects, and that money will be paid if the most dishonourable expedients are to be resorted to, to raise it without utter ruin to himself. I believe you now understand fully my wishes with reference to this long delayed settlement."

"Yes; I perfectly comprehend them, and I will carry them out to the best of my ability. I will have the money deposited in the bank of London to your credit, and after that I wash my hands of the whole affair."

"Certainly; beyond that service I have no claim on you, but I shall always remember it with gratitude. We must part now; I shall remain but a few hours, and I need not farther trouble you. I can make my own arrangements for leaving, if you will send up the clerk to me as you pass through the office. Accept my thanks for your attentions thus far, and assure Mrs. Stanly that I shall always remember her with grateful affection."

"Is that all? Will you give me no clue to the route you intend to pursue? to the steps you intend to take to renew your old influence over the man you are bent on bringing to ruin and despair?"

"I can do neither, and it is a waste of sympathy to bestow it on him who wrecked my life, and made the woman he put in my place scarcely less wretched than he rendered me. I met her once; I pledged my word to her then to avenge us both, and I shall certainly do it. Our parting here is final, and it is better for you that it shall be so. Adieu, Mr. Orme; I trust to your honour, and that of your sister, to keep my secret, and to make no attempt to follow me in the devious path it may be necessary for me to pursue."

She arose and offered him her hand; he raised it to his lips, fixed one long and earnest glance upon her lovely face, and without uttering another word, left the room.

In a few moments the clerk came up, and Claire informed him that she wished to go by the night train to a small town on the coast, where she knew Ada Digby was to be found. As she had no company, she requested him to make the necessary arrangements for her departure: he courteously assured her that everything should be attended to, and a carriage be in waiting in time to convey her to the train.

She then sat beside the window, looking out on the crowd of hurrying pedestrians below, wondering if among them all was one more desolate, more hopeless than herself. She pitied herself, she blamed herself, yet she clung with strange pertinacity to the one idea which had animated her life through so many years.

That night she went on her way to the little sea-coast village in which Miss Digby's last letter had told her she was to be found. She stopped at a station on the way, and hired a carriage to take her to Seaview, as the cottage was called.

#### CHAPTER LXVIII

It was a bright and beautiful day in June when Claire reached her place of destination: a romantic cottage situated about half a mile from a straggling little village lying on the sea-shore. The low-roofed house was embowered in trees and covered with trailing vines, but its front windows commanded a fine view of the ocean. A large garden in front was filled with shrubbery, and flowers bloomed in profusion on every side.

Claire alighted at the gate and went up the winding walk, wondering if the letter she had written to Miss Digby before leaving Paris had yet reached her. The place looked solitary and unoccupied, and she began to fear that its temporary mistress might already have left it.

Her doubts were set at rest by the sudden opening of the door, and the appearance of a lady upon its threshold. Her figure was tall and commanding, her features clearly cut and regular, and there was an air of decision about her, which showed that she thought and acted for herself. Her dress was perfectly plain and fitted accurately to her erect figure, and the dark hair that lay in smooth bands beneath

her plain lace cap was slightly threaded with silver. The expression of calm repose, mingled with sweetness, which characterised her face, inspired confidence and affection in all who were thrown into contact with Ada Digby, for she it was who glanced with some surprise at the figure advancing with quick steps to greet her.

She came forward a few paces, and in her pleasantly-modulated voice, said:

"I thought I heard a carriage stop at the gate, and I came out in the hope that it brought a dear friend to my arms. But man is born to disappointment, and of course woman too, in a much greater degree. Since you are not the friend I expected, I hope that you bring me some news of her, madam, and if you do you shall be most welcome to Seaview Cottage."

"I hope that I bring my own welcome with me, Ada. I do believe that you have forgotten me, though I should have known you anywhere, or under any guise. You have scarcely changed at all, but from your looks I must have undergone a complete metamorphosis."

In another moment Claire was clasped to the heart of her friend, who kissed her many times, and then held her at arm's length and gazed in her face, exclaiming:

"How could I know you, Claire? You left me a broken-hearted child, and you come back to me a beautiful and fully developed woman. The years that have brought you to perfection only, have whitened my hair and faded my cheeks, while to you they have given all that is most precious to woman."

"Not all, Ada; there are things more precious than charms of person, which I have failed to attain. They were your heritage, and they are better worth possessing than the poor ephemeral beauty of which you seem to think so much. You may have grown a little older, but you still look good and true as in those days when you took to your heart the forlorn stranger who had no friend to stand by her but yourself. Ah! sister of my soul, what would have become of me in that dreary time but for your sustaining kindness? I shudder to recall that past, yet I have come hither to live it over again; to renew the struggle; but this time to come off conqueror."

Miss Digby looked searchingly at her, and drawing her forward, said:

"Let us go in, and when you are rested and refreshed, we will talk over those days. Oh, Claire! it makes me young again to see you standing fresh and fair before me as if time had stood still for you, or only lavished on you greater charms. You were a pretty and attractive girl, but now you stand before me a bewilderingly beautiful woman; you have come hither to make that beauty a snare and a curse to him who once trampled you in the dust and mire of his own selfishness. Yet, dear Claire, success will be fatal to you. It will be worse than death to place yourself in the power of that hard and reckless man I have your last letter, and I am ready to do anything to prevent you from consummating the sacrifice you meditate."

"It would be a greater sacrifice to give up the object of my life," was the quiet reply. "But we will talk of this later. Just now I can think of nothing but the joy of being with you once more—of hearing the ring of your true voice."

"Thank you, my dear, and pardon me for referring to your private affairs in the first moment of meeting; but your letter only reached me yesterday, and since it was read I have thought of little else than you and your strange purpose in coming back to your native land. Let us go in and make ourselves comfortable. I will send my servant to bring in your luggage."

They entered a wide hall, from which doors opened on either hand, and Miss Digby threw back one which opened into a large room with two deeply embayed windows, looking towards the sea. This was fitted up as a sitting-room and library; but Claire noticed that one of the cases which had been intended for books was filled with bottles of medicine, among which were found a few standard works on the science of which Miss Digby was so fond. In the centre of the floor was a round table, on which was an open writing-desk and a basket of needle-work.

The soft summer air, laden with the perfume of flowers, was wafted through the room, and after taking off her bonnet and shawl, Claire sank into the large chair her friend drew forward for her, and with a smile said:

"The arrangement of this room is perfectly characteristic. I remember your old passion for botanical studies and for practising medicine. Since you removed to this place I suppose you have become the liberal dispenser of your life-giving elixir."

Miss Digby laughed:

"I have done what I could for those who are too poor to employ a regular physician; and I do not think that I have ever killed anyone yet. My pre-



[THE MEETING OF ADA AND CLAIRE.]

parations are simple and mostly made by myself, for I have fitted up a small laboratory and become quite a dabbler in chemistry."

"Ah! if you could only have known my brother, Ada. He and you would have been congenial spirits, and your strong practical sense would have counteracted the mania to which he fell a victim. I wrote to you about the delusion which absorbed his fortune, and finally cost him his life."

"Yes—it was a sad history, and one in which I deeply sympathised—but in place of correcting his fantasy, I might have fallen into it myself, for at times nothing seems impossible to the chemical enthusiast. Luckily for me, new cares have been thrust upon me, and the time I once devoted to my studies and experiments has been almost absorbed by the charge I have undertaken. I wrote telling you that I have two young girls living with me, the daughters of an old friend. One of them is an invalid, and it was for her benefit that I came to this cottage by the sea."

"I remember—you did not tell me who they are, but your reticence led me to guess. They came from York, you said, and you once told me of a friend you had there who had, in your youth, been dearer to you than a brother. Are they not Mr. Balfour's children, Ada? I hope their father is not dead."

A faint flush came into the cheek of Miss Digby, but her eyes brightened as she said in a subdued tone:

"No. George is not dead, though he has borne grievous afflictions. The history of his family is one of those tragedies that are enacted sometimes during the prevalence of the fever. It is two years this summer since it raged there as an epidemic. Mr. Balfour was compelled to leave his home on important business in the early part of the season; at the time of his departure little apprehension was felt, for the town had been free from the ravages of the pestilence for several years. It broke out within two weeks after he left his home, with great violence. Mrs. Balfour was one of the first to be struck down with it; it is a harrowing story, Claire, and I will make it as brief as possible."

"When poor George heard of the sickness he hurried home as fast as steam could take him, but when he reached it he found his house closed, his wife dead, and four of his six children sleeping beside her in the cemetery. The second and youngest daughters still survived, and they had been removed from the infected atmosphere and taken away by a friend. He found them, the elder half broken-hearted at the losses she had sustained, and the younger too ill with the fever to know or care for anything."

"Mr. Balfour's anxiety to save the two darlings left to him, sustained him under this awful bereavement, and as soon as Louise was strong enough to bear removal, he returned to London, and took lodging for himself and children at a farmhouse a few miles distant, where he hoped the pure air would restore the strength of the little girl."

"But the disease left behind it such effects, that the physicians declared that sea-bathing alone could be of any permanent benefit. He then wrote to me, and appealed to my benevolence to receive his motherless children, and do for them what the claims of his business would not allow him to do."

"Of course, I consented, for George has never forfeited his right to be considered by me. We were both victimised by a hard, and selfish man, and I scarcely blamed him for the course he pursued, when he thought that I had been false to all the pledges I had given him."

"Alice and Louise came to me, and I used all my skill as a nurse to restore the little one. Mr. Balfour purchased this place, and I removed to it, in the hope that the sea air and bathing would renovate her health; she has improved much, but she is still delicate, and requires constant care."

"It is a sad story indeed, but I hope that good to one I love will result from it. I can easily understand that the charge you have undertaken is no burden to you, for your active mind must have employment, and your benevolence leads you to expend your energies in the service of others."

"Don't flatter me, Claire; you know of old that I hate the semblance of it. I will leave you now to make yourself comfortable, while I order a cup of tea, and something nice for you after your long drive."

Claire detained her by laying her hand on her arm. "I have breakfasted, Ada; I had a cup of coffee, and some bread and butter at the station. I could not eat just now. Indeed I need nothing but your pleasant face, and dear voice to cheer me up a little."

Miss Digby sat down beside her, saying: "Then you shall have them, my dear, and I must say that the sight of your fair face is as welcome to me as the morning sunshine. I scarcely anticipated seeing you so soon, for, as I told you, your letter from Paris announcing your intended return, only reached me yesterday. Oh, Claire! have you well weighed the purpose hinted at in that letter? Do you comprehend what you have travelled all this distance to face?"

Claire lifted her eyes to the questioning ones bent upon her, and steadfastly replied:

"I have weighed everything, and I would sooner relinquish life itself than give up the fulfilment of that long-cherished dream. I have waited long for the death of the woman who stood in my way, and when I saw it announced in an English newspaper which reached my hand by chance, I knew that fate pointed out to me the path I must pursue, and my resolution was at once taken, and I am here to accomplish it."

"But Claire, when I tell you all that the unfortunate wife of Walter Thorne suffered at his hands, you will shrink from taking the position from which death has released her. He treated her badly almost from the first day of their marriage. He accepted her at the dictation of his father, and he was not generous enough to conceal that fact from her. The life he and Agnes lived together was terrible, for Mrs. Thorne was spirited, and resentful, and nothing kept her with him but the daughter that was born the first year of their marriage. Walter threatened to take the child from her if she left him, and she stayed to have her heart broken, and her temper embittered, by the harsh indifference he manifested not only towards her, but towards his daughter."

The listener shivered, and grew perceptibly paler, but she replied:

"I shall avenge her. He never loved her—he did love me. I know that, although he was base enough to give me up as he did. I shall rekindle that passion—give it sweetest food for a brief season, and then return to his lips the bitter cup of which he made me drink."

"Claire, this is madness. As you value your peace do not seek Walter. Remain with me for a season, and then go back to the land in which you have so long dwelt as happy as it is permitted the most of us to be. Bury in oblivion the memories connected with your native land; it will be best—indeed it will."

Claire arose, and raising her graceful form to its utmost height, impressively said:

"I will risk everything to regain the position from which I was so ignominiously thrust—to obtain the favour to torture him in his turn. Walter Thorne adored me once when I was far less attractive than I know I now am, and he shall come back to me with more than the old love. He shall become my slave, and then I will repay him not only for my own wrongs, but for what that unfortunate woman suffered at his hands."

The concentrated force and bitterness with which the last words were pronounced made her friend shiver.

(To be continued.)





[THE SORCERESS ALARMED.]

## THE FLOWER GIRL.

## CHAPTER IX.

We must leave Lauretta for a short time, to follow the sorceress from the time of her escape from Sir Albert Tempest, on Shingly Green.

The reader will remember that Sir Mortimer had seen Flaydilla struggling in the arms of Siballa, and that the latter reappeared on the green with the child.

When Sir Mortimer lost sight of the sorceress, she had taken refuge and temporary concealment in the booth of one of her many vile acquaintances. When the affray terminated, as has been related, she crept from her hiding-place, to encounter and escape from Sir Albert.

She eluded his search by flying from the enclosure and mingling with the multitude in the street, until she entered a narrow lane, where she paused to take breath.

Little Flaydilla, warned by many a cruel shake and merciless pinch, and by her recollection of the former brutality of the old woman, had not dared to scream or cry out, after she lost sight of her beloved protector, Sir Mortimer.

Therefore she remained, silent and trembling, in the brawny and hairy arms of her dreadful captor, too terrified to raise her beautiful blue eyes to the fierce and bloodshot orbs which glared, like those of an angry tigress, from the red and bloated face of the sorceress.

"Come, let me sit down a bit," snarled Siballa, puffing heavily, for she was weighty and corpulent, and, though remarkably active and fleet of foot for one of her years and size, was soon put out of breath by violent exertion.

She sat down upon a stone which served as a doorstep for the poor abode before which it was, and after darting her wary eyes around, and seeing that the lane was deserted, she began to talk at Flaydilla.

"How dared you run away from your good, kind, dotting old grandmother?"

Flaydilla made no reply. She felt ill and faint, poor child, and as the hideous old woman bent her ugly face over her, the fumes of Siballa's detestable breath, laden with the leas and odours of strong drink, nearly stifled the child.

She turned her beautiful face aside to escape the foul odour, and grew ghastly pale.

"Oh, you are not strong," sneered the sorceress, as she took a phial of camphor from her pocket, and held it to the child's nostrils. "You never were

strong—more's the pity, or I'd make a rope-dancer of you. There, smell that, it will do you good. You needn't tremble so; I am not going to hurt you."

"Oh, let me go, please," pleaded Flaydilla, revived by the scent of the camphor. "Please let me go."

"Go where, simpleton?"

"To brother Mortimer. Oh, do let me go. I know he will pay you ever so much to let me go."

"Mortimer? His name is Mortimer, is it?" asked Siballa, eagerly.

"Yes, and he loves me. Do please let me go."

"Wait, and maybe I will. You say his name is Mortimer, eh? Yes. Mortimer what?"

"No, not Mortimer. What, but Mortimer Clair."

"Clair? Humph! Clair? As I live that was the name of the man in the chest," muttered the sorceress. "At least that was one of his names. I must tell the earl of this. It is very strange. Clair? Say, my little pet, where does brother Mortimer live?"

"I do not know the name of the street, but I can find the house if you will place me on London Bridge. Oh, do! mother will be so frightened."

"Mother? Oh, thou there is a mother, is there? 'brother Mortimer's mother?'"

"Yes—she is my mother, too, and so kind. Oh, she will cry and be so—"

"Come, that is all nonsense, my pet. Don't be making such a fuss nor talking so loud," snarled Siballa, looking around suspiciously. "Speak low. Has she—the mother of 'brother Mortimer,' blue eyes?"

"No, jet black, and so loving. Ah, I wish she was looking at me now."

"Oh, jet black? So, that looks very suspicious," muttered Siballa. "Name Clair, and eyes jet black. She has red hair, eh?"

"No, jet black, with some white in it."

"Hasn't got a mole, a spot right here, has she though?" asked the cunning woman, placing her forefinger in the middle of her chin. "I know she hasn't."

"Yes she has, and I kiss it every night after I kiss her lips," replied Flaydilla.

On hearing this reply, the sorceress uttered a yell of genuine terror, and began to tremble violently, at the same time shaking the little girl, as if enraged.

"Ho! you are telling a falsehood, you monkey! You are spinning a string of lies, you know you are! Say, ain't you lying, eh?"

"No indeed, I am not, good lady?" cried Flaydilla, as soon as she could find an opportunity to speak. "It is very wicked to lie."

"Who told you that, eh?"

"Mother did, and so did brother Mortimer."

"Humph! they are a pair of born fools," said Siballa. "If people don't lie in this world they can't make their salt. Mind that, simpleton. Didn't I use to tell you to lie and steal for me, eh?"

"Yes, I know you did, but I did not like to do it, and so I ran away. Do let me go, and I will pray for you," pleaded the child, clasping her little hands, and raising her soft blue eyes, full of tears.

"Ho! she will pray for me!" laughed the sorceress. "But say. You are certain she has a mole right here, in the middle of her chin, right above a deep dimple. May be she has no dimple there though, eh?"

"Yes she has. Please let me go!"

"Named Clair; jet black eyes; has a mole—has it right above a dimple in the chin," muttered Siballa, closing her ugly red-lidded eyes, as if to remember something years off in the dark past. "The woman I am looking at in my mind was all that. I can see it now plain—plain as day. But she was drowned, she was drowned with her unborn child."

Here Siballa Thornbuck shuddered, as if her review of the past had conjured up a scene of horror so terrible, that even her callous and merciless soul recoiled from the vision.

"Drowned? Yes. I saw her drowned; I helped; I threw the sack over her head—aye, with these hands I did," she muttered, opening and shutting her fingers, as the wondering, trembling child lay in her lap.

"Drowned? Yes. For I helped to toss her into the river—the river running swift and swollen, rain falling in torrents, rain, sleet, and hail, and freezing on my hair as it fell. Dark as a cave beneath the sea—flashes of lightning, claps of thunder—I can see it all, hear it all. Ugh! that was an awful deed on an awful night! I did it; I and another. The woman could not scream, for the sack was over her head—drawn tight around her neck. I believe she was strangled before we threw her into the river—yes, she must have been—I meant that she should be. We made sure work of it. We should have been fools if we had left her a ghost of a chance. Of course she went down like lead, and if not already choked to death, she was drowned in a moment. Let me see—did we bind her arms and feet? No. Why? Because there was no life in her when we tossed her into the swollen, roaring river. And her body was never found. No, and no one but me and another ever knew what had become of her. Why, she fainted the minute I slipped the sack over her head in the garden. Of course she was strangled, either by the cord or by the water. But who is this woman—named Clair;

eyes jet black; hair jet black; mole in the middle of the chin, right above a dimple? Then—this son of hers—this Mortimer, who looks marvellously like the man in the chest?"

Here she opened her eyes and fixed them upon those of the child.

"Come, I am going to take you to your mother, as you call her."

"Thank you, thank you! I am so happy, so glad!" exclaimed Flaydilla, clapping her little hands, while her eyes sparkled with delight.

"Yes, but you must show me the way, my pretty pet, for I don't know where she lives."

"I can find the house if you will take me to London Bridge," said Flaydilla, eagerly.

"Choot! Choot! Philip!" cried the sorceress, suddenly raising and turning her head about, and in a moment after, the huge owl we have before mentioned, circled from above and perched upon her head.

"The darling bird! Is it hungry? Did it not lose sight of its good mistress?" said the sorceress, raising her hand and stroking the soft plumage of the uncouth pet. "It wouldn't run away from its kind grandmother like the bad little girl! Oh, no! never! It knows who loves it. Good boy, pretty boy, darling boy!"

Little Flaydilla shrank from the enormous eyes and terrible stare of the great owl, and wondered, in her childish mind, if this old woman were not indeed the grandmother of the feathered monster.

"She may be," thought the child. "Their eyes are alike, and their noses are sharp and hooked, only the old woman's has humps and lumps all over it. Oh, of the two the owl is not the ugliest."

"Come, let us go to London Bridge," said Siballa, rising. "You may walk, and I will hold you by the wrist. Don't you dare to try to get away. Do you hear?" she added, giving the child a severe shake, and then a pinch with her long, hard nails, nails as coarse, horny, sharp, and as curved as the claws of her owl.

"I will not try to run away!" replied Flaydilla. "Why should I, when you are going to be good, and take me home?"

"Yes, why should you?—only little girls are such simpletons. Of course I am going to take you home, but don't you try to get away, and leave your dear, poor, old, half-blind grandmother to be lost. She don't know anything about the streets, poor old woman, only the way to London Bridge, bless her ignorant soul; does she Philip, eh?"

The owl snapped his horny beak, as if to confirm Siballa's assertion of her child-like ignorance of every street in London; scarcely a lane, alley, or passage of which she did not know as well as she did her own name.

"Watch her, Phil. Keep your eyes on her, Phil. If she tries to run away, pounce on her, my boy. Tear her eyes out, claw her face into ribbons, and then we will eat her up, body, bones and all, for our supper—for our nice supper, lad."

The owl knew very well what supper meant, for he was a voracious fellow, fond of eating, and as he recognized the word, snapped his bill, and flapped his broad wings, Flaydilla nearly sank with fear.

The sorceress now strode on in silence, grasping tightly the delicate wrist of the child, and carefully avoiding the most public streets, but passing through dark and lonely lanes, and narrow, damp alleys, until she paused on London Bridge.

Night had set in, yet Flaydilla recognized the locality, and when the sorceress asked:

"Do you know the way now, for we are on London Bridge?" she replied, joyfully:

"No, yes! We are not far from my home."

"Well, lead on, my pet, and we will soon kiss our mother. Of course we will, and then you must ask your mother, as you call her, to give the poor old woman a bit of silver money for taking such good care of you, eh?"

"I know she will," cried the delighted child, as she hurried on, with the tight grip of the cunning woman upon her wrist. "Besides, I have a little velvet and gold purse at home, with gold and silver pieces in it, and I will give you some of them."

"Ho! You are sure you have not the purse with you now, eh?" said the greedy old woman, halting, and tightening her grasp upon the little wrist.

"Oh, yes! I know I have not got it with me, for I forgot it this morning, when brother Mortimer and I set forth to have a merry day of it. But that made no difference, for brother is very good, and gave me money."

"Maybe some of it is in your pocket now," muttered Siballa. "Let us see."

So saying, she thrust her fingers into the pocket of the child's girdle, and chuckled as she found a few silver and copper coins.

"A bird in the hand, eh? You needn't give me so much as you meant to do, now," she said, as she

placed the coins in her long leathern purse, and complacently packed it away in her bosom. "Now lead on, only take me first to the house exactly opposite to your home; then we'll cross straight over and come up to your front door in style, eh?"

"We shall soon be there," replied Flaydilla, as her heart throbbed with joy. "We turn down this street, do we not?" she added, pausing, and gazing around.

"Ah, I thought it was getting too dark for a little simpleton like you to find the way. Come, we will go to my house, and to-morrow we will come back."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the child, terrified by the very thought of passing a whole night in the company of the sorceress. "Wait, please; I shall remember in a minute. Please wait, and then, when we get home, I will give you all the money in my purse."

"Eh? You don't think, now, pet, that you could steal into the house—your home, I mean—and not let anybody know it, eh? And get your purse and bring it to me? You see, your mother, being, as she is, no doubt, a great lady, might be angry, and not give me, poor old woman that I am, a farthing for rescuing you, poor little mite, from all that dreadful fighting, and leading you safe home. You don't think, now, do you, pretty pet, that you can bring me the purse, unbeknown to anybody?"

"Yes, I can. That will be easy. But I am sure mother will give you some money."

"Perhaps; but she wouldn't let her little girl give away that pretty purse with all its money. So I think I had best take you to my house; you remember where I need to live when you run away?"

Remember! Ah, the poor child would never forget that horrible abode, to which her mind, young as it was, had often returned in dreadful dreams of the grinning skulls, stuffed and hideous serpents, skeletons knug on wires, swaying to and fro as Siballa waved her wand, and pretended to say incantations, while her black catfron boiled and simmered as she cast in magical herbs and roots, and revelled in all the imposing ritual used by those impostors, who feigned supernatural powers.

Flaydilla had not forgotten, young as she was, all or any of these things, nor how she, little waif of woe and misfortune, used to sit, cowering and trembling, in a dark corner, lest the heavy hand should drag her forth and beat her.

Often since her flight from that dreaded band, which was again tight and close upon her wrist, had she waked from fearful, blood-curdling dreams, and cried out:

"Save me! Mercy! Do not kill me, grandame!" and then sobbed herself to sleep again upon the loving, protecting bosom of kind and gentle Madam Claire.

So when Siballa spoke of taking her back to that detested, dark, and unholy place, where all the dead monsters and fleshless bones seemed to come to life, and wag their hideous heads, at the beck of the sorceress, she almost screamed:

"No! please do not, good lady! I know where I am now, and I will get the purse for you—indeed I will."

"That's a darling dear, but don't talk so loud, my pretty, pretty pet, or I shall have to pick it up and run away with it," said the sorceress, delighted to find that she could play upon the fears of the child. "I am glad that you remember—but hush! Someone is coming. Here, we will hide in this deep doorway a minute."

And clapping her hand over the mouth of the child, to prevent her from crying out, as she might dare to do, being so near her home, she dragged her into an archway, and waited for the approaching footsteps to go by.

It was a steady, firm, and rapid footstep, with a light jingling as if of spurs, and the tinkling of a sword chain rattling against a sheathed sword; but the hour was very dark, and nothing but the mere outline of a tall and stately form could be dimly seen, by the dull glimmer of a lamp shining through a window of thin parchment near.

Yet Flaydilla thought, and was not wrong, that she recognized the step and the shadowy form as it passed rapidly by.

"Oh, it is brother Mortimer!" she mentally cried, yet so fearing the dreadful woman that she dared not move a muscle. "It is brother Mortimer! Oh, if he only knew I was so near!"

"I know the man sleeps in the chest!" muttered Siballa, as her watchful eyes saw this form pass by, and trembling as with an ague with superstitious fear. "I know the man sleeps in the chest, or I would swear that was his step as I heard it last, years and years ago. Ay, and his form, too! Perhaps it is his ghost, broke loose from the iron-bound chest and roaming by night, as they say unburied spirits will. The earl must bury the chest—he must,

he shall. He should have buried it when the deed was done. Ugh! how cold it is!"

The footsteps died away in the distance, and brave Sir Mortimer strode on, bold and fearless as was his noble nature, never dreaming that beneath that archway he passed so carelessly, fluttered in terror a warm little heart which loved him with boundless devotion, as brother and protector.

Neither did he suspect that the same archway hid one whose limitless wickedness had cast a dark shadow over all his life, and whose malign influence was even then actively at work to make all his future one of sorrow and woe.

He passed on into the deep darkness of the night, and, as his martial tread died away, the sorceress, not knowing who had passed, yet shuddering with her memories of the past, stole forth from her hiding-place, dragging the helpless and trembling child with her.

#### CHAPTER X.

"Do you know who that was? Does he live hereabout?" asked Siballa, after a moment of silence, and withdrawing her hand from the child's lips.

Little Flaydilla, glad to be allowed to breathe freely, gasped quickly for an instant to recover breath, for the pressure of the hand had been cruelly severe.

"Say," repeated Siballa, shaking her sharply, "do you know who that was?"

"Yes—I think—I am sure it was brother Mortimer."

"Ah! Can it be true! Then there is more than idle fancy in my fears!" thought the sorceress. "I must see the mother of this Mortimer Clair. Here, lead on, Fla. Hurry. Be sure to go exactly opposite to your home—does your mother live in a house all to herself—no other family, I mean? Of course she has servants, eh?"

"No family but ours lives in the house. It is a nice cottage, with a pretty front yard. Mother has two servants."

No more was said for several minutes, and then the child paused, saying:

"Now we are exactly opposite mother's house. I know how everything looks. You don't, because it is so dark. Do you see a light burning in the front room, down stairs?"

"Ay, I see—I see. What of that?" asked Siballa, straining her eyes to see more. "Oh, I know the place now, though I haven't been hereabout for more than three years. Yes, I remember the cottage and all about it, though it is so dark I can't see even the outline. It used to be called Holly Cottage, eh?"

"It is called so now. And don't you see a lady kneeling near the lamp?"

"Yes, I see. Who is it?"

"It is my mother!" exclaimed Flaydilla, clapping her hands. "Do let me go to her! I will tell her how kind you have been, and she will ask you to come in, and she will give you nice clothes, food, and money."

"Stop!" I have told you what you must do," snarled the sorceress, restraining the eager child. "You must go and bring me that purse—you think there is gold, yellow money in it?"

"Yes, eight or ten pieces, and some silver. Brother Mortimer gave it to me."

"Well, don't think you can trick me, imp. If you don't come back to me with the purse I will come right in and kill your mother!"

"Oh, don't hurt dear mother!" exclaimed Flaydilla.

"Yes, I'll come right in and cut her head off with this if you try to trick me, or let her know that you are bringing me the purse. With this!" drawing a great knife, and at the same time clapping a hand over Flaydilla's mouth.

It was well that she did stifle the scream of terror which otherwise would have pealed sharply on the still air of night. The poor child for an instant imagined that the cruel woman had really cut her with that dreadful knife.

"There, you are not hurt. I only wanted to show you how I'll treat your mother if you try to trick me. You must bring me all the money and jewels, rings and bracelets you can find in the house, or I'll be at your mother like a hawk. Now let us cross the street and go into the garden. I'll wait at the window until you come back. I will keep my eye on your mother, and if I think you are trying to cheat me, in I come. Wait; let us take a peep at her before you go in."

The stealthy old woman, still retaining that rigid grip on the delicate wrist, crossed the street and noiselessly opened the little gate. She passed over the soft grass and halted before the window of a room in which a lamp was brightly burning.

Little Flaydilla was not tall enough, when immediately beneath the window, to look into the room, but



the ugly face of the sorceress was on a level with the window sill, and her keen eyes peered in eagerly.

Madam Clair was kneeling near the table on which the lamp was burning, and her face was raised above her clasped hands, while her lips moved, as if she prayed to heaven for its protection over her son and the lost child.

The rays of the lamp fell radiantly upon her pale and noble features, so that the sorceress had a clear view of them, nor was the lady more than five paces from the flaming eyes fixed upon her.

"If I didn't know," muttered Siballa, trembling as she gazed, "if I wasn't just as sure of it as I am that I live, that I helped to strangle and drown her, I would swear that this woman is Mabel St. Orme. But Mabel St. Orme is dead—her bones are at the bottom of the river, if they haven't decayed years ago. I can't see the mole the way she is looking. Ah! it must be! No, for I strangled and drowned her. Maybe Mabel St. Orme had a sister, a twin sister, and maybe this woman is that sister. But I never heard that Mabel St. Orme had one, and then it would be strange if she too should have married a man named Clair, and I know that the man in the chest had no brother; and if he had one, which he had not, it wouldn't be probable that the brother, and I know there wasn't one, should take the name of Clair, as the man in the chest did, and marry the sister, if there was one, of Mabel St. Orme, and have a son, the living image of the man in the chest. Oh, no. It is only what they call a coincidence. No, the dead never come to life in this world, and I know Mabel St. Orme is dead and gone to the fishes these twenty and odd years—yes, twenty-three for that matter."

Her eyes now wandered about the lady's room, examining it minutely, and she soon whispered to Flaydilla:

"There is a small table just at the door, behind your mother. She is kneeling at a table near the middle of the room. You know where she is?"

"Oh, yes! Mother often kneels there and prays," returned Flaydilla, with difficulty restraining her sobs.

"Yes, there is a crucifix on the table, I see. But listen. There is a small, round table to the left of the door, towards which your mother's back is turned. You remember?"

"Yes, I know where everything in the room is," replied the trembling child.

"Well, there is a casket on that table. What is in that casket?"

Flaydilla made no reply. She knew that Madam Clair kept very valuable jewels and papers in that casket, and that she had been accustomed to regard it as something very sacred and mysterious.

She had often seen her gentle protectress open the casket and read the letters she took from it; read, weep bitterly, press them to her lips, and sob heavily; and the child had sobbed with her, from that generous sympathy which is ever fresh, pure, noble, and angelic in the virgin heart of childhood.

Flaydilla had seen Madam Clair kiss the jewels, and wet them with her burning tears, as she sobbed:

"He gave them to me! My noble, my lost Ethelbert gave them to me on our bridal morn! Alas, my son, and these are all that cruel fortune has left to me. Yes, these and my bleeding, breaking heart!"

The child had seen and heard these things, and therefore to her the casket was holy.

"Say, what is in the casket?" demanded Siballa, in a fierce whisper, so close to the child's ear that Flaydilla felt the bloated, burning lips pressing against her temple, and the hot teeth bruising her tender flesh. "Answer, or I will—"

"Pearls! Diamonds! Rubies!" the tortured girl lunged to reply, but the strength of a noble heart, young and helpless as it was, nerved her to remain resolutely silent.

"You won't answer?" hissed the angry sorceress, yet afraid to execute her threat, for just then something cold and damp touched her hand, while a low, deep growl warned her of near danger.

"Ugh! what is this?"

"It is Canute, brother Mortimer's dog," replied Flaydilla, yet afraid to raise her voice above a whisper.

"He will not hurt you while I am near."

"Canute? A monstrous dog! Now when you go in make him follow you, do you hear, and look him up in some room or closet, or I'll kill your mother on the spot, and you too, and eat you up! Mind! And you must bring me that casket."

"Oh, I cannot do that!"

"Then see what I will do. I will first kill your mother; then you. You can open the door behind your mother, lift up the casket, and steal out without her hearing you. Now go, and remember. Take the dog with you."

And giving the beautiful ringlets of the terrified child a parting shake, she let her go, for the first

time since she had snatched her up on Shingly Green.

Flaydilla whispered:

"Come, Canute," and moved away, the great dog reluctantly, though obediently following her, for his master had taught him to regard the child as his absolute mistress. He growled deeply, as if he protested strongly, and the watchful woman, whose many deeds of midnight villainy had accustomed her eyes to see well in darkness, caught the gleam of his as he vanished.

"I think she will obey me," muttered Siballa, when alone with her owl, which she now placed upon her shoulder. "If she don't, I will watch, and catch her some day, and wring her head off. I know where she lives now, and if she plays me a trick to-night I can easily manage to get hold of her again. It is worth all the risk. The purse with gold and silver in it, perhaps another purse which she may find, and that casket, which no doubt is full of jewels and gold. Oh, yes, it is well worth the risk; for if the child tricks me—and I don't think she will—I can catch her again. Ho! as for that, the owl will have her by force, if we can't manage in any other way. But how strangely like Mabel St. Orme she looks!"

Siballa now fixed her eyes upon the face of Madam Clair, who had not moved from her attitude of prayer. She gazed long and steadily at her, now and then shaking her head as if in great doubt, and frequently muttering:

"No, that is impossible. She was strangled. She was drowned. I saw it. I did it—I and another one."

Time passed on, and the sorceress began to grow impatient for the appearance of Flaydilla, either at the door or at her side.

"If she tricks me," she muttered, grinding her teeth, savagely, "I'll have her life. Ah, the door is opening—easy—easy—she is coming. She is going to do it. She dares not disobey. I know she wouldn't deceive me. How slowly she opens the door! Yet it is opening—no doubt of that!"

It was true. The door was opening—the door which was behind Madam Clair. Wider and wider the eager sorceress saw it open, until she drew her breath deeply and slowly as she saw the beautiful head, the pale face of Flaydilla appear.

The angelic loveliness of the child was startling in its ghastly pallor—the pallor made more perceptible by the mass of jetty curls which crowned that beautiful head and floated upon her neck and face.

One quick glance at Madam Clair, then a stare of terror at the window, to meet the basilisk eyes of the sorceress.

The devilish eyes were there, poor, fear-fascinated child—keen and green, flaring and gleaming, fierce and threatening, blazing in that scowl, bleated, fiendish visage like baleful fires, fed with malice and wickedness.

Flaydilla saw them—knew they were watching; felt that they were commanding, menacing. Her young heart flew to her throat, her young blood ran chill and cold, her young limbs trembled like quivering leaves hung on broken webs.

She saw the great hand raised and a finger stand out straight, pointing, like inexorable Fate, at the casket.

"Oh, anything but that," said the eyes, the pale face, the supplicating attitude of the child.

"That! I must have—I will have that!" thundered the hideous countenance of the silent woman.

"If she does not make haste, the woman will look around!" muttered the angry sorceress, grinning ferociously at the child.

Had Siballa Thornbuck threatened Flaydilla with violence, or even death, to herself only—had she not sworn to slay Madam Clair and Mortimer if she disobeyed, the noble child would have dared all peril rather than think of stealing the casket of her beloved protectress.

But Flaydilla, who knew well the atrocious nature of her former tyrant, who had seen her commit dreadful and cruel crimes, dreaded her more for Madam Clair's and Mortimer's sake, than for her own. So, having crept into the house noiselessly, enticed Canute and courageous Canute into a closet, shut him up a prisoner, and found her pretty, well-filled velvet purse, she had softly opened the door of Madam Clair's apartment, scarcely knowing what she did, or why she did it, only that there was a horrible woman out there, ready and certain to slay with that great knife, if she did not.

She was near the casket. It was not necessary for her even to enter the room to lift the casket from the deep velvet cloth upon which it rested.

She had only to stretch out her arm, grasp the brazen handle, and draw it noiselessly into her arms, then turn and vanish, as she had appeared, unseen, unheard, unsuspected by her protectress.

As she paused, trembling, doubting, quivering, palpitating, the voice of Madam Clair, till now raised

only in whispered, prayerful petitions, rose clear and distinct, thus:

"And oh, Heavenly Father, protect the little child whom thou didst for a time trust to my care! She hath been snatched from me by wicked and violent hands, which are eager in all iniquity. Protect, defend her, oh, gracious heaven! Restore her, I pray thee, to those who will love and most tenderly care for her. Save her, all good angels, from the contamination of the sorceress, the unholy Siballa Thornbuck, into whose dreadful power she hath fallen. Let her heart be strong and resolute to defy temptation and to resist evil."

"Mother, mother!" exclaimed the excited child, unable longer to hear that pious and loving appeal, or strengthened thereby to shake off the terrible spell of fear which till then had bound her.

"Mother, dear mother!" she cried, and darting towards the kneeling and now amazed lady, she threw her arms around the neck of her protectress.

"My child! my darling child! have you been restored to me?" exclaimed Madam Clair, as she pressed the fluttering girl to her bosom.

"There I see there!" cried Flaydilla, pointing at the window, through which glared the face of the sorceress, convulsed, distorted, devilish with rage.

Madam Clair turned her eyes quickly, for she saw that the child was trembling with affright, and as her glance fell upon the infernal visage at the window, she uttered a cry of terror, and sprang to her feet.

"It is the sorceress!" she said, as she recoiled in haste towards the door, and clinging to Flaydilla as if she dreaded that Siballa might again snatch away the child.

The sorceress, who had not been able to hear what had been said, but who had seen all, dashed in the window with a single blow of her flat, her hard hand shattering the sash, and scattering the glass on every side.

"Let me hear her voice," thought she, as she struck so boldly. "Let me know if the voice is that which was Mabel Orme's."

She was too heavy to spring into the room, as she would have done, if only to punish Flaydilla; but she drew herself up a few inches, and resting her weight upon her hairy arms, as she placed her elbows over the window-sill, glared at the terrified lady and child.

Madam Clair, held by terror, did not fly from the room, but gazed at the hideous face, as it snarled:

"So you tricked me after all, you lying little wretch! But I'll have you again, I will, and tear you to pieces—you and that woman, who is no more your mother than I am."

"A way, detestable woman!" cried Madam Clair, recovering her courage.

"It is the voice of Mabel St. Orme," croaked Siballa, staring at the lady. "The voice as it was, and the face as it would have been had she lived. But she was drowned."

Madam Clair heard these words, and understood them; but she made no reply, hoping that the woman would depart.

What more Siballa Thornbuck might have said cannot be told, for at that moment Canute bounded into the room, growling fiercely, and seeing her at the window, flew at her furiously.

It was then that the owl aided his vile mistress to make a safe retreat. As she let go the window, at sight of the dog, she cried out:

"His eyes, Phillip! His eyes!"

And, not pausing to witness the result, she betook herself to her heels, while the savage and pugnacious bird pounced upon the head of the dog, even as he sprang at the window.

The force of the dog's leap, which had been aimed at the throat of the woman, carried him clear through the shattered sash, bearing the fierce bird with him.

The owl, of great size and strength, fastened his huge, sharp claws in the face and ears of the dog and dug at his eyes with his horny beak.

Canute unused to this kind of antagonist, fought fiercely to rid himself of him, and it was not until the servants of the house had rushed to the spot, with lights, that the valorous owl, uninjured in flesh, though ruffled in plumage, released his tenacious hold, uttered a hoarse cry of triumph, and vanished like the feathered evil one that he was.

By this time, however, Siballa was far beyond pursuit, and while Canute retired in confusion to have his wounds dressed, she hurried to the abode of Callise Staver, where she met Sir Simon, and entered into his schemes for the destruction of Lauretta, as has been related.

(To be continued.)

THE HUMAN FIGURE.—Taking the head as a standard—that is, from the crown to the chin—the whole length of the figure of a man may be const-

dered as measuring seven and a half or eight heads; of a child, the proportion will be according to its age; one of seven or eight years old may be allowed five and a half heads; and an infant, nearly four. When the arms and hands are fully extended horizontally from the body, if the distance between the tips of the fingers from the right hand across to the left be measured, it will be found equal in length to the whole body; so that a well-proportioned man can stand in a square frame and be able to touch the sides of the square respectively with his head, his feet, and the extremities of his fingers. The distance from the top of the shoulder,—that is, from the head of the *humerus* (the upper bone of the arm)—to the elbow is the same as from the elbow to the first knuckle of the hand; the same distance occurs horizontally between the outer parts of the shoulders; from the top of the *sternum* (breast-bone) to the navel, the same; from the lower part of the breast bone to the *pubis* (the bone across the lower part of the body), the same; thence to the top of the *patella* (or small bone on the knee, generally called the knee-cap), the same; and from the lower part of the *patella* to the instep the same. The knowledge of these uniform lengths, so repeatedly occurring, is a very material help in drawing the figure, preventing many doubts and difficulties.

### SCIENCE.

**THE BATTLE OF SADOWA.**—We have now authentic reports of the Austrian artillery firing at the battle of Sadowa. There were in action that great conflict 672 guns on the side of the Imperialists; 46,535 rounds were fired; that is to say, an average of 69 each. The battle lasted nine hours, and therefore the Austrians fired 5,200 shots an hour and 86 the minute.

**A DESCRIPTION OF A CLOCK,** which is apparently only a single plate of glass having the usual figures of the dial upon it, and a hand which keeps the time, with apparently nothing to move it, is circulating largely among our exchanges. This is probably no new contrivance, but an imitation of the celebrated glass clock, constructed by Houdin, the French prestidigitator many years ago; which was so ingeniously devised that a person looking at it ever so closely could not discover the works, although he might, to all appearance, look entirely through the entire apparatus and see all the objects upon the opposite side of it.

**THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION.**—This expedition is likely to have one good result, by introducing into this country the plan of obtaining water from considerable depths without the expense of sinking wells. The attention of the public has just been directed to this matter by the trial of an invention, patented by Watson and Baker, the experiments having been made at Upper Plaistow, before a number of scientific men of the day and persons officially connected with Government. The locality was gaily decorated with flags, and a public dinner was held at the Victoria Tavern in honour of the experiments, which are said to have been very successful. Upper Plaistow, by the way, in spite of Plaistow Marshes, is, according to Government statistics, the healthiest district in England, except Eastbourne, in Sussex.

**THE NEW ATLANTIC CABLE.**—The manufacture of the new Atlantic telegraphic cable, which is to be submerged between Brest and a suitable terminus on the shores of the State of New York, is progressing satisfactorily. The new cable is almost identical in construction with those completed in 1866, the only difference being that the diameter of the conducting copper core is slightly greater, and the outside wires are of homogeneous Bessemer steel, galvanised, having a breaking strain of about 1,000 lbs., while the wires outside the existing Atlantic lines have a breaking strain of only about 800 lbs. The new cable will be laid in two lengths—one from Brest to St. Pierre, in deep sea, of 2,325 miles, not including slack, and the other from St. Pierre to the terminus, of 722 miles in length, not including slack.

**THE DEPTH OF THE CHANNEL.**—I have often amused myself (says a scientific writer), when crossing the English Channel, by asking people what is their notion of the depth of it, and very rarely have I found that they have ever given the subject a thought. Let us take, first, that part between Dover and Calais. I have in my eye a family party with whom I crossed over lately in the steamer, and to them I addressed my usual formula, "What do you think is the greatest depth to be found between those two points, and what is the average?" The father I knew as one of the wise men of the east, who had made a large fortune in the City as an average-ester. He was unable to make any statement, and would not rashly commit himself to figures, although I assured him, as I had often heard in court, that it might be used in evidence for or against him. The

mother professed her belief in mountains and valleys, and propounded an ingenious theory about salt-mines, from which our principal supplies are drawn; but at what precise depth she was unable to say. The daughter generalised on the subject, and showed a commendable acquaintance with the heights of the principal mountains in Europe; but, beyond expressing an opinion that it was ever so deep, gave it up in despair. The son honestly confessed that he was not good at distances, except with his gun, or in judging the pitch of a cricket ball in bowling. They all asked me to enlighten them if I could, and I gave to each a familiar illustration by which it was immediately brought home to them. The father would hardly believe me when I told him that if St. Paul's were submerged in the deepest of it, more than half of the building, including the whole of the dome, would remain above water. The mother was surprised to hear that it was no deeper in any part than the street was long in which they had a house—which happened to be Grafton-street. The son immediately realised it on being told that it was a fraction less than three times the distance at which wickets are pitched, or about the range of his gun at which a partridge could scarcely call its life its own. The daughter, who I knew was skilled in archery, was not a little astonished to learn that it represented the extreme distance she was ever called upon to cover between her and the target. Reduced into figures it stands thus:—The extreme depth is sixty yards, and the average does not exceed forty; and this for a distance, in a straight line, of twenty-five miles.

### THE FRENCH SYSTEM OF TANNING.

The hides are first thrown into a vat of lime water, where they remain until the hair is loosened; then they are taken out, the hair removed, and the hides put to soak in the river to remove the lime. After this they are scraped and carried to vats, where they are covered with "juice of tan," that is, water in which tan bark has been soaked, until the solution is as strong as possible. After three or four days, the hides are again removed and scraped, and put into the vats, where the process is achieved. Here we find the first essential difference between the system of America and the French. In America, the hides are put into the vats with a good deal of water—here they are put in and packed firmly in the vats dry. Then, when the vat has been filled up over them with three or four feet of tan, a few pails of "juice of tan" is poured over, hardly enough to moisten the whole mass.

The hides remain in these vats for at least six months—sometimes two or three years; the longer the better. For first-class leather a year is required; but such is the increase of value in hides, in proportion to the time they rest in the vats, that they could not find a better investment for their money. Seven to ten per cent. a year is added to the value of the leather, by resting in the vats up to four years, after which time there is no farther motive for letting it remain, as it has absorbed all it can contain of the properties of the tan. After coming out of the vats, the leather is scraped, rolled, dried, and curried; but all these are operations which have no influence on the durability of the leather, being simply matters of ornamentation and finish. The secret of the excellence of French leather is resumed in these three observances: 1st, using strong tan, i.e. the bark of young trees; 2nd, packing the leather in the vats dry, and wetting the least possible; 3rd, letting the leather stay a long time in the vats.

### STATISTICS.

**TAX UPON HORSES.**—The tax returns state that in the last financial year the tax upon horses in Great Britain was paid upon 654,116. The duty of 3*l.* 17*s.* upon race-horses was paid upon 2,406. The guinea duty upon horses exceeding 13 hands, used for riding and drawing carriages chargeable with duty, was paid upon 194,958, and the half-guinea duty upon horses under 13 hands on 63,418. The half-guinea duty was paid also upon 217,405 horses used in trade—125,369 kept by farmers; 4,088 kept by bailiffs, shepherds, or herdsmen; 4,406 kept by rectors, vicars, or curates; 537 kept by Roman Catholic priests or dissenting ministers; 3,574 kept by physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries; and 13,655 used by common carriers. The 5*s.* 3*d.* duty was paid upon 24,300, being horses under 13 hands used in trade. The gross produce of the tax was 421,465*l.*

**EMIGRATION IN 1868.**—The number of emigrants who left the ports of the United Kingdom at which Government agents are stationed in the quarter ending September 30, 1868, was 52,625. The numbers in the corresponding quarters of recent years were as follows:—33,240 in 1862, 58,320 in 1863, 46,467 in

1864, 65,054 in 1865, 47,153 in 1866, and 55,807 in 1867. Of the 52,625 emigrants in the summer quarter of the present year, 35,720 sailed from the port of Liverpool, 3,823 from London, 1,107 from Plymouth, 3,911 from Glasgow and Greenock, 6,005 from Cork, and 2,059 from Londonderry; the numbers embarked at these last two ports represent the total emigration from Ireland, and show an Irish emigration of only 8,064 souls; while the numbers for the corresponding period of recent years were 11,341 in 1865, 9,242 in 1866, and 12,146 in 1867. Of the emigrants from Irish ports during the summer quarter of 1868, 7,332 were bound for the United States, and 732 for British North America. Of the emigrants from Scotch ports, 2,727 were bound for the United States, 809 for British North America, and 57 for the Australian colonies. Of the emigrants who embarked at Liverpool, 29,368 were bound for the United States, 4,863 to British North America, 1,048 to the Australian colonies. The destinations of the 4,930 emigrants who embarked at the ports of London and Plymouth were as follows:—To the United States, 1,306; to British North America, 260; to the Australian colonies, 2,686; and to other places, 678.

**THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.**—That in England there is one birth to every 80 persons living, one marriage to every 122 persons living, and one death to every 45 persons living. That according to the marriage registers 22 per cent. of the men and 30 per cent. of the women who marry are unable to write. That the proportion of persons marrying under age is 7 per cent. among males and 20 per cent. among females. That 14 per cent. of the men who marry are widowers, and 9 per cent. of the women who marry are widows. That boys are born in the proportion of 104 to every 100 girls born. That males experience a higher rate of mortality than females, so that if there were no emigration, or if the men and women emigrated in pairs, the numbers would be reduced in the end very nearly to an equilibrium, and the men and women living of all ages would be in the proportion of 100,029 to 100,000; emigration, however, has upset this hypothesis, and the census declares the majority to be in favour of the women—that is, there are only 95 men to every 100 women; the mean male death-rate in this country per 100,000 of population, in 29 years, being 2,332, against a female rate of 2,154, so that to every 100 deaths of females there are 103 deaths of males, or of equal numbers living the number of male deaths to every 100 deaths of females is 103. That the rate of increase of population is gradually decreasing; thus, it was 18 per cent. in the 10 years 1811-21; in the 10 years 1851-61, it was only 12 per cent., or 1.141 per cent. per annum, at which rate the population of England would double itself in 61 years. That the average age at which marriages are first contracted in England—that is, excluding marriages of widowers and widows—is 25.5 years for males and 24.3 years for females. That the average age of husbands is 43.0 years, and of wives 40.5 years; the husband being 2.5 years older than the wife. That to every 100 births there are six children born out of wedlock annually. That out of every 100 children born 26 never see their fifth birthday; that the births in England are registered in the greatest proportions in the first two quarters of the year; that the deaths are most frequent in the first quarter of the year; and that the marriages are most numerous in the last quarter of the year. That the mean after lifetime or expectation of life of males and females respectively, at birth, is 39.9 years and 41.9 years; at 5 years of age it is rather more—49.8 years and 50.8 years; at 20 years of age it is 35.5 and 40.3 years; at 30 it is 32.8 and 33.8 years; at 40 it is 26.1 and 27.3 years; and at 50 it is 19.5 and 20.8 years. The mean age at death for males and females respectively, with which the expectation of life should never be confounded—is, at birth, 39.9 years and 41.9 years; at 5 years of age it is 54.7 and 55.3 years; at 20 years of age it is 59.5 and 60.3 years; at 30 it is 62.8 and 63.8 years; at 40 it is 56.1 and 57.3 years; and at 50 it is 69.5 and 70.8 years.

MANY of the postage stamps that have recently arrived in Paris on letters from Spain had the Queen's head punched out of them.

We hear that the entrance-gate of Burlington House, with its historical associations, was offered to the Duke of Devonshire. Had his Grace accepted the offer, the gate, re-erected a little farther west, might have adorned Piccadilly for generations to come. Now, however, it is in course of demolition, or rather of taking to pieces, for the dismembering is very carefully done, and all its parts, as well as those of the colonnade, are to be stacked in Battersea Park until the Office of Works shall have made up its mind as to the site on which they shall be reconstructed.





[SELWIN'S STRANGE PATIENT.]

## DESERTED.

DOCTOR SELWIN SABLE. It looked well, and I was rather pleased with the alliteration. Yet I would have given ten of the best years of my life to have known how I came by that name, and if I had any right to bear it. What few acquaintances I had, and they were few indeed, considered me an "odd" fellow—they often said so. I was so reticent, could seldom be made to speak of myself, or my family. They considered me fortunate, and thought I must be very wealthy—the heir of a vast property, as my father was known to be dead. How known? Because I had said so. What else could I say? I had commenced in my boyhood by saying that I did not know whether my father was alive or dead, who he was, or what his occupation or residence. The stare of bewilderment with which this answer was received taught me wisdom as I grew older. I saw how strange it made me appear, and I adopted the plan of calling myself an orphan—yet, to the best of my belief, my mother still lived. I had no wish to deceive, I merely desired to put aside useless questioning, which embarrassed my friends and annoyed me.

My whole life was a mystery. I adopted a reserved manner to hide what I could not explain. To the best of my knowledge I never saw my father. It was not a pleasant fact to acknowledge even to friends. Nor had I ever seen the face of my mother, that mother who loved me so tenderly, and yet who seemed either afraid or ashamed to claim her child. I can remember her warm caresses, her tender words, as she bent over me in childhood, the thick blue veil that hid her features, and which I, with childish fingers, tried so persistently to tear away. The face was never revealed to my longing gaze. When I was five years old she ceased to visit me.

I was reared by an old couple in one of the suburban villages. Their name was Latham. The man was a skilful machinist. The woman kept their little cottage as neat as wax. They were a hard working couple and had always been poor. The money they received for my support was a great addition to their income, and they accepted the charge without cavil or inquisitiveness.

"Selwin," the old man said to me, with tears in his eyes, a strange thing for him, for he was not very sympathetic by nature, "we have got to part, and I'm sorry to say it, for I've got used to seeing you here, and shall miss you. The old woman feels worse about it than I do; it's cut her up awful. But if you were our own son, I'd be proud to give you just such a chance as you've got, and let you go into the world and be something."

Honest John Latham! I can see him now, as he stood that day, wiping his eyes with his grimy sleeves. I was as much affected as he was. The worthy couple had endeared themselves to me, during the many years I had passed beneath their humble roof, and had they been my own blood relations I could not have loved them better.

"Selwin," he began again, "I think I ought to tell you something about yourself. The old woman and me have talked it over, and she thinks so too. You see you ain't my nephew at all, no relation, and I haven't the slightest idea whose son you are, or who you belong to."

I pass over my natural surprise and innumerable questions, and proceed to the main points of John Latham's story.

He had come home to dinner one day and found a young lady—a girl in figure and appearance—holding an infant scarcely two years old in her arms, sitting in converse with his wife. The object of her visit was soon made known. She wished them to take charge of the infant, and offered a liberal price.

It was a strange affair, and the strangest part of it was, that she wore a thick blue veil which effectually concealed her features.

John Latham was a poor man; life had been to him one unceasing round of toil, and he was offered as much for the care of this infant as he could earn by the daily labour of his hands—in fact, it would just double his income. He looked in his wife's face, read her wishes there, and expressed at once his compliance with the visitor's request. He asked no questions, but accepted her story without comment. She told him she had been deserted by her husband, and circumstances obliged her to put the child away from her. She told them to call the child Selwin Sable, and took her departure, thanking them with much earnestness, as if her heart were relieved of a great weight. The remittances came regularly.

"Though if they had not," cried honest John, warming at the remembrance, "we should have taken care of you all the same."

This woman, with her face always veiled, came at regular periods to see her child, and always expressed her satisfaction at the care the boy received, until, as I have said, I had reached the age of five years, and then her visits ceased. The remembrance of her was very shadowy in my mind, and amidst my boyish sports and occupations, I seldom thought of the veiled face that had bent over me in my childhood. This conversation with John Latham revived the memory, and made me acquainted with my true history; for until then I had really believed myself to be his nephew.

I went to college with this strange mystery in my mind. I now received an allowance, with a short letter, written in a cramped and evidently disguised hand. It contained these words:

"You are now of age to act for yourself—the world is before you, and you must make an honourable place in it. The means will not be wanting; this amount, herein enclosed, will be remitted to you quarterly, by one who takes the deepest interest in your welfare. Yet endeavour to make yourself independent, as none of us know what may happen. So long as I have the means you shall not want. Heaven has smiled upon me beyond my deserts, but who can say what the morrow may bring forth? Let nothing urge you to attempt to discover your benefactor, for that would be sure ruin to us both."

There was no signature—nor did the writer imply by any word that she was my mother. There was but one inference to be placed upon this matter—I was the child of shame, and she would not acknowledge me. A boy's indignation filled my veins as I read it, and, had I known her address, I would have sent back the money, and depended entirely upon myself.

"Better have been the nephew of John Latham, an honest mechanic," I cried, passionately, as I paced the narrow limits of my chamber, "than the child of a heartless mother who will not own her son."

Other thoughts came as I grew calmer. I saw a way to rectify it all; I would study hard, I would gain a position in the world, I would save money, and one day, when I had discovered her, which I was determined to do, I would pay her back every shilling. It was rather a visionary scheme, but it satisfied my disturbed fancy.

A shadow was on my life, a shadow that no effort of mine could entirely drive away. No wonder my companions thought me cold and unsocial, for I avoided all society as much as possible. They all had parents, relatives, of whom they were proud. When I was asked who my parents were, what could I say? Everybody seemed so surprised at my ignorance, and I felt so awkward and confused, that I adopted the plan of calling myself an orphan, stating that I had lost my parents before I could remember them. It saved me a world of annoyance.

Time passed on, and I received occasional letters of congratulation and commendation at the progress I made, but not one word of affection, not a syllable that could indicate that a mother was writing to her child. I left college with credit, and commenced studying medicine, for which science I had conceived a great liking. Its mysteries pleased my morbid fancies, and I experienced a strange pleasure in probing into strange maladies. I obtained my diploma. My annuity still continued—five hundred a year—such a sum might have led many young men into idleness and extravagant habits; but it was not so with me. I was prudent and economical; I had an object before me, for I had never relinquished my purpose of paying all this money back. The thought would intrude itself that the woman who could afford that liberal sum must be the possessor of ample means. It was among the rich and prosperous, then, that I must look for my mother. But would she acknowledge me when I had found her? Had she not said herself that to seek to discover her was to bring ruin upon both?

I was melancholy, and thought I might forget

myself in the mimic scene. There seems to be a fatality in these things. The play was "Adelgitha"—an old play seldom represented now. Perhaps you have seen it and know the plot—its similarity to my situation was so striking that I became deeply interested in it. The heroine has a son, whom she was forced to abandon in infancy, and the affection she evinces towards this son when meeting him, grown to manhood, after the lapse of years, is construed into a guilty passion by the villain of the play, for she is married to the noble duke, Robert Guiscard, who has been kept in ignorance of the existence of this son—a fatal omission which involves her in calamity. In one of the most affecting scenes, where Lothario, the son, encounters his mother, there was a sudden confusion and stir in the seat below me, and I heard some one say:

"A lady has fainted."

Impulsively I sprang to my feet and hastened to her assistance. A young lady, apparently about eighteen, richly dressed, and evidently moving in the best circles, was trying to raise a companion who lay, like one dead, across the seat. She had fainted. I remember being struck at the time with the strange contrast between these two. The one standing was dark, with black hair and eyes; the one who had fainted was light, with most luxuriant golden hair—blue eyes could only go with such a complexion, the fairest I ever saw—but the eyes were closed, and the face was like marble.

"Allow me to assist you," I said to the lady who was striving to raise her insensible friend; "I am a doctor."

She bestowed a smile upon me, the sweetest, I thought, I ever beheld, and gratefully accepted my assistance. Together we got the fainting lady out into the cool air, which revived her partially, but not entirely. As I observed her shapely figure, and the slenderness of her waist, I had a shrewd suspicion that tight-lacing had something to do with her indisposition. It was not the place to relieve her there, and I suggested to her friend that I had better obtain a cab for them.

"If you would be so kind?" she murmured. "It really must be something serious—I never knew her to faint before."

I hurried away to obtain a cab. I noticed a knot of young men clustered together, and talking loudly.

"What was it?" asked one.

"One of the twin beauties fainted," answered another.

"Which—the dark-eyed beauty?"

"No—the fair-haired divinity."

I did not stop to hear more, but hastened into the street. It was evident the ladies were well-known and acknowledged stars in the firmament of beauty—but from the little observation I had had, I decidedly gave the preference to the dark-haired one. A cab chanced to pass by, I hailed it, secured it, and hastened back to the ladies.

The "fair-haired divinity," as she had been called, had recovered sufficiently to walk, and she accepted my arm to descend the stairs, as her companion said:

"The gentleman who so kindly assisted you."

She was still very weak, and never glanced at me; her eyelids seemed too heavy to lift, and she reminded me very much of a drooping lily. We passed through an admiring crowd, and I knew I was very much envied, and reached the cab.

"Where shall I tell the man to drive you?" I asked.

The dark-haired one gave me the direction, and added:

"Get in, doctor—you must not leave us—your services may still be needed."

I got in, perforce—how could I refuse? Accident had given me my first patient.

"How do you feel now, mother?" asked the dark girl.

"Better," answered the other.

I never was so bewildered in my life. Her mother! The "fair-haired divinity" her mother? She was the younger looking of the two, and the smallest in figure. I began to think that cosmetics had something to do with that wonderful complexion, and that the luxuriant golden tresses might not all be real.

"Is she your mother?" I asked, my surprise betraying me into this bluntness.

The dark-eyed daughter laughed merrily, and her mother joined in her mirth, though in a very quiet manner.

"Oh, yes," she replied. "We are always taken for sisters by strangers. There's another compliment for you, mother. Permit me to introduce ourselves. This is Mrs. Perry Travancore, and I am Blanche Travancore."

I acknowledged the introduction. Fortune had indeed befriended me. Mr. Perry Travancore was one of the wealthiest shipping merchants. It was

something to a young doctor to have so good a patient to begin with.

"Perhaps," I returned, "I should also make known my name, not very famous at present—I am called Selwin Sabie."

"What a pretty name!" cried Blanche, artlessly. "Don't you think so, mother?"

Mrs. Travancore did not answer. She leaned back in her corner of the cab, still and motionless.

"I do believe that she has fainted again!" exclaimed Blanche, in alarm.

I made a motion to feel her pulse, when she moved, and disengaged her arm from my grasp, in rather a petulant way, I thought.

"Nonsense, child," she exclaimed, rather angrily, "don't think I am going to keep on fainting all day. I feel weak and tired, that is all. Yes; it is a pretty name. You are very young, doctor?"

"Twenty-two," I answered.

She bent forward her head and fixed an earnest look upon my face, and for the first time I saw her eyes distinctly. They were blue, but so large and lustrous, beaming with such a liquid light as I had never seen in any other woman's eyes—they were wonderful in their beauty—piercing in their regards. I could not fathom the meaning of the glance with which she transfixed me—it seemed to read my inmost soul. She appeared satisfied with her scrutiny, however, for she sank back upon her seat with a sigh of relief.

"Excuse me, Mr. Sabie," she murmured; "I always judge a man by his face, and I think I may safely trust myself in your hands. Here we are, home; you can soon have an opportunity to prescribe for me."

I thought Mrs. Perry Travancore rather a singular woman, and that opinion did not change as our acquaintance progressed.

They left me in the splendidly-furnished drawing-room, while they removed their apparel in their own apartments.

They returned to me in the most exquisite toilettes. Looking at Mrs. Travancore, it was almost impossible to realise that she could be a wife and a mother. She had the figure and face of a girl of twenty. No wrinkles marred the smoothness of her white forehead, no sign of care or sorrow was in the large, full eyes—certainly the handsomest I ever saw in a woman's head; and yet she must have been thirty-five years of age at the least, for Blanche was a woman grown, certainly not younger than eighteen, and looking twenty. Standing side by side, and being half a head the shortest, Mrs. Travancore was the youngest, most girlish looking. No wonder they were taken for sisters; and yet never were two sisters more unlike.

Mrs. Travancore cast herself languidly into a chair. There was a singularly amused expression upon her face as she did so.

"I am very fragile, doctor," she murmured, languidly, half veiling those beautiful eyes and gazing at me through the lashes in a manner that I could not interpret and which bewildered me strangely. "Mr. Travancore will be seriously alarmed when he hears of this, he is so anxious about me."

I could readily imagine such would be the case. It required no great stretch of fancy to suppose Mr. Travancore to be a staid, sober man of fifty, who fairly idolised his handsome, girlish-looking wife. I found this, afterwards, to be the case. Yet how could she imagine herself to be fragile? Delicate-looking she certainly was, but full of buoyant life and healthful strength, which her fair complexion and exquisite symmetry of form most effectually concealed.

I had the blunt honesty common to young, unsocial men. After feeling her pulse with due gravity, though seriously annoyed at the mirth that sparkled from her half-closed eyes, despite all her efforts to suppress it, I said:

"There is nothing the matter with you, madam."

She opened her eyes with another of those glances which I found it so difficult to understand—glances that proved that she was indeed no girl, but an accomplished woman, thoroughly conversant with worldly wisdom.

"Oh, this will never do, doctor," she cried, raising her pencilled eyebrows with a deprecatory motion.

"You will never prosper in your profession if you cure your patients so easily. My health is very precarious, isn't it, Blanche?"

"You often complain of sick-headaches," answered her daughter, innocently.

"Allow me to prescribe for you, madam," I rejoined, with professional gravity.

While I wrote the prescription she began to question me. I was not inclined to be very communicative; but she continued, how I can scarcely say, to lead me to speak of myself and my solitary life. Blanche listened attentively, which, perhaps, made me more communicative than I would have been. Not that I revealed all—no, I could not speak of

that mother who either would not, or dared not, acknowledge her son. I merely told her that I was an orphan, who had never known either a father or a mother's love.

"Is your mother dead?" she asked me, suddenly. The conscious blood mounted to my brows and I hesitated to reply.

Those earnest eyes were wide open now, gazing intently upon my face. What could I say, especially before her daughter, a young, fresh mind, uncontaminated by the world's gross contact? You will understand now, how strangely situated I was. Prevarication was my only refuge. I could not say I did not know—which was the truth—for that would have caused an embarrassing surprise and awkwardness, therefore I replied:

"She is dead!"

Was she not dead to me? There was a mournful cadence in my voice, as I answered, with eyes cast upon the ground, and a sigh escaped my lips.

"Poor boy!"

It came like an echo to my own bitter thoughts. I raised my eyes quickly in surprise, and found Mrs. Travancore, gazing upon me with tenderness in her lustrous eyes. With true womanly perception she had, doubtless, divined those portions of my history which I had suppressed, and pitied me.

It is needless to linger longer over this first interview. Mrs. Travancore persisted in believing herself ill, and I regularly attended her.

Six months sufficed to establish me at the Travancore mansion as family physician, and a welcome visitor whenever I chose to call. I found Mr. Perry Travancore a wiry, energetic man of fifty, gray-haired, with a thin, hungry-looking beard, small features, and sharp, bright eyes that reminded me of a mouse's in their glitter; indeed, there was a general mouse-like expression in his face altogether. Blanche did not resemble him much—her good looks must have come from some other member of the family, for she was no more like him than like her mother. She had his long straight nose and pointed chin, and something of the glitter of his eyes, but that was all. I found Mr. Travancore a very genial gentleman, and as he was very fond of draughts, and I allowed him to beat me in two games out of three, we got along very well, and passed many pleasant evenings together. Then again, I was fortunate enough to cure him of a severe attack of rheumatism in a very short time, when pressing business made it very irksome for him to be detained at home, and that gave him rather an exaggerated opinion of my ability. On the whole I think he entertained a very favourable opinion of me. A shrewd, long-headed, knowing man of the world was Mr. Perry Travancore, who reckoned his wealth by hundreds of thousands. I had serious doubts of his ever consenting to accept me as his son-in-law.

The best friend I had in the house was Mrs. Travancore. Unfortunately she was too good a friend. I had made an alarming discovery—Mrs. Travancore loved me. It was not conceit upon my part; the fact was too palpably shown in all her intercourse with me.

Like many women of the same fragile appearance and languid manner, she had an imperious will of her own, and was evidently the head of the family. She ruled Mr. Perry Travancore completely, but with such skill, that he always thought that he had everything his own way; a delusion that he was very happy about.

I feared this woman; much as I loved and respected her. If she had suffered an unholy passion for myself to spring up in her heart, it would for ever blast all my hopes of obtaining Blanche's hand.

People will talk, and idle gossip had informed me that Mr. Travancore had selected his partner from a very humble situation in life. She was a poor seamstress, it was said—(I know not with what truth, I merely give the rumour as I heard it.)—when her beauty won his heart. Her face had made her fortune. She owed all to him. The rose may take its root in lowly soil, but the flower is none the less beautiful for that. There was no trace of humility in Mrs. Travancore—she bore her honours regally, and quelled it among the best. Wealth had placed her loveliness in a gorgeous setting, and the glittering frame gave it additional lustre. She won the good opinion of all who approached her, and robbed envy of its sting by an impenetrable unconsciousness. Never was a woman more self-poised, so considerate to the demands of society.

It was impossible for me to mistake her feelings towards me. I had been blind not to have seen the deep, yearning affection in those wonderful eyes, which beamed upon me when we were alone together. I am ashamed to confess that she had, by the exercise of that gentle power of fascination, which seemed to be so peculiar to her, wormed from me the whole story of my life.



"You should not blame your mother, Selwin," she said, with touching pathos, and calling me by my Christian name—another of her peculiarities; "you do not know what cruel necessity may have driven her to act as she has done. Some powerful motive—which, if you understood it, you would pardon and forgive—compels her to keep herself unknown to you. If it were in her power how gladly would she own you; for she must be proud of such a boy as you are."

I cannot describe the glance that accompanied these words. I shivered involuntarily, for something seemed to draw me irresistibly towards this woman, and make me love her despite myself, yet, heaven knows, my heart did not falter for a moment in its allegiance to Blanche.

Events now crowded rapidly upon the even tenor of our lives. Mr. Travancore came home one day very ill. I was sent for, and on arriving found him in a high fever and delirious. Some business had taken him on board a vessel in the harbour, which had just arrived from a foreign port, and he had become infected with a malignant fever. The danger was supposed to be over, but the vessel had not been properly purified. Some derangement in his system, probably, made him more susceptible to the disease. The malady gained fearfully upon him. I forbade Mrs. Travancore and Blanche to approach his chamber; there was infection in every breath. I summoned the best medical skill to my assistance. Blanche kept her room, but Mrs. Travancore would not leave the sick man's chamber, and watched by his bedside night and day. I expostulated with her—told her she was killing herself without being of the least assistance to him.

"I will never desert him," she cried. "He has given me all that made life worth the having, and to the last I will abide by him. He is all I have in the world!"

"All!" I exclaimed, thinking of Blanche. She smiled through her tears.

"There is one other," she murmured, thankfully. Never was there a more devoted nurse in the sad days that led Perry Travancore, step by step, into the vale of shadows. The fearful malady could not be stayed. His head was pillowed on her bosom when he died, and with his last breath he blessed her. She had won an angel's crown by her devotion. Then the overtaxed frame gave way and she fainted in my arms.

I made the necessary arrangements for the funeral, feeling strangely ill at ease, and returned to the house. Mrs. Travancore was already up again—what an iron frame this fragile-looking woman seemed to have!—and received me in the drawing-room. A strange dizziness was in my head, and I had dull pains throughout my frame, as I entered the house. As I crossed the threshold of the drawing-room the floor appeared to give way beneath my feet, blindness came over my eyes, I had a sense of falling, and all became a blank. I had taken the fever.

My return to consciousness found me in bed, in a chamber strange to me, from what little I could see of it, for I was so weak I could not raise my head. My eyelids faintly struggled open and then closed again. I could hear the murmur of voices. One of these voices I distinguished as belonging to Mrs. Travancore. Had she nursed me through this dreadful fever, and again risked her life? I was confident of it. Her devotion in this instance had been crowned with success. She loved me, and she was free to wed. Was she my fate, and should I have to yield to her? Had heaven given her freedom, to make me her slave? I would rather have died than relinquish Blanche.

The voices approached the bed. "My darling! my precious one! You are left me still. I have not lost all. God has been merciful to me, although I did not deserve it. Oh, now I need no longer hide my love. He sleeps. He cannot hear me say, I love you! I love you!"

"O mother!" with a suppressed shriek. "Blanche!"

Mrs. Travancore sprang to her feet. Blanche had stolen gently into the room, fearful of disturbing the invalid, and had surprised her mother in this passionate outburst.

"You love him, mother?" asked Blanche mournfully.

"I love him," answered Mrs. Travancore.

"And will you—marry him—when your mourning has expired?" faltered Blanche.

Mrs. Travancore laughed merrily.

"O no, dear," she answered; "I shall leave that for someone else to do. Blanche, do you think I could so soon forget your noble father? Ah! you should have a better opinion of me. The widow of Perry Travancore will never bear the name of wife again."

"But you said you loved him?" persisted Blanche, who did not seem to like the idea at all.

"And so I do. Shall I tell you why? There are secrets in all lives, and mine has not been exempt from them. I have a secret, Blanche, which I have jealously guarded for more than twenty years. Do you know why I love this young man? I can trust you and I will—because he is mine, Blanche, my boy—my son!"

"Your son?" cried Blanche, in utter amazement. But her astonishment could not equal mine. This was a development I had never dreamed of. The proud and beautiful Mrs. Perry Travancore my mother! Dolt that I was to have mistaken a mother's affection for a guilty passion—and, oh, madness and despair! Blanche was my sister. The joy of life was quenched for ever. My senses reeled, and I relapsed again into insensibility.

The crisis had passed, and health and strength were fast returning to my enfeebled frame.

"Selwin," said Mrs. Travancore, as she sat, next day, by my bedside, "is not Blanche a peerless girl? Among all the women I have met I do not know her equal. She is as good as she is beautiful. I have guarded her from every thought of evil—watched over her with more than a mother's care. There, you must get well as soon as you can, and then we will have the wedding."

"How can that be possible?" I gasped. "How can I marry Blanche—my sister?"

"Blanche is not your sister; she is not my child, but Mr. Travancore's, by his first wife—I am only her stepmother."

I think these were the sweetest and most welcome words I ever heard in my life.

One day when I was well enough to sit up, for I was now convalescing rapidly, she told me her story.

In girlhood her home had been in a secluded village, a small place among the mountains, famous for its trout-streams. She had early lost her mother, and to this sad event she attributed the evil that occurred to her. Her father was a rigid sectarian, who looked upon the world as one great workshop, and thought it almost a crime to smile. He reared her with an iron hand. He was for ever telling her that her face would prove her ruin. He made home irksome to her, checking every youthful aspiration to pleasure with unsparing zeal. He prayed daily and nightly, in her presence, that heaven would keep her steps from the broad path that leadeth to destruction. He seemed so confident that she would go astray, that the child grew up with the conviction that it was her destiny to be ruined.

She met her fate when she was but fifteen. It came in the person of Albert Selwin, a tourist, a reckless, unprincipled, though talented young man, who gained a good living, when he was not too indolent to work, painting landscapes and mountain scenes.

It is needless to linger over what followed. They met every day and rambled among the rocks and glens. He was a villain and she trusted him. He went away at last, making all sorts of promises, none of which were ever kept, and she realised what she had done.

Driven from her father's roof, she had no other path to pursue than to seek for Albert Selwin, and implore him to repair the wrong he had done her, by marriage.

She was fortunate enough to find him. He was very much surprised at the sight of her, and received her quite coolly. His passage was already secured for abroad, where he was about to spend the winter on business, and he said it was utterly impossible for him to take her with him, but that he would procure good apartments, charge himself with her expenses while he was absent, and marry her on his return.

When fairly domiciled in the Travancore mansion, she found her duties very light, and was treated with great kindness. The birth of Blanche made Mrs. Travancore more of an invalid than ever, and rendered my mother of great value to her; but the sight of the little girl made her yearn for her own child.

She got permission to go to London. She went with the intention of getting her child, and placing it near her, where she could visit it often. Returning, chance led her to John Latham's dwelling. She adopted every precaution to keep herself unknown. She paid liberally, as she had been in receipt of good wages and had been prudent. She still had the idea that she must keep her secret, or lose her place.

The death of Mrs. Travancore led to events she had never foreseen. She remained in the household to take care of Blanche. One strange piece of intelligence reached her. Accidentally she learned that Albert Selwin had died of yellow fever abroad one month after his arrival. On the very day that she received this intelligence, Mr. Travancore asked her to become his wife. She accepted his proposal, and when they were married, she thought more than ever that the secret must be preserved.

This was my mother's story. Whether she was right or wrong in the course of deception she pursued, I have never attempted to judge. It was not in my heart to reproach her for the errors of the past. I am Blanche's husband now, and we guard the secret between us. It is the only shadow in our otherwise happy household. G. L. A.

## SIR ALVICK.

### CHAPTER XLVI.

THE sharp trials through which Hugh De Lisle had passed within the last few months, his great anxiety of mind, his grief over his ruined reputation, and especially the fearful nature of his position at the moment, made his face appear at least ten years older than he really was, as his eyes, stern and severe with reproach, met those of Lady Matilda.

The same extraordinary resemblance he bore to the late Marquis of Galmount, to her unfortunate and murdered husband, which had alarmed Sir Alvick Ulster, now affrighted, or rather appalled Lady Matilda.

The broad, high brow, white, polished and expressive of a mind of no ordinary power; the heavy, black and proudly arching eyebrows; the penetrating, flashing, yet steady eyes, stern, reproachful, severe, commanding; the clear-cut nose, slightly aquiline; the broad, firm chin, and the heavy, drooping moustache; the poise of the exquisitely-shaped head; the full, rounded, muscular neck and throat—all these were astonishingly like the features of Lord Hayward Fitz-Osborn, Marquis of Galmount, as Lady Matilda remembered that ill-starred nobleman.

With the same stern, haughty, reproachful gaze, and from eyes exactly the same in fire and depth, the marquis had regarded her, as he reclined upon a sofa in Osborn Castle, twenty-three years before, on the very day on which he walked forth to stroll into the Tangle, from whence he was, two days after, borne, a murdered man, most unjustly branded as a suicide.

Lady Matilda had never forgotten that last interview with her deceived, most foully betrayed husband. In her sleep, dreams which repeated that last meeting, that last parting with Lord Hayward, had haunted her for years; making her start from her slumbers, cold, gasping, trembling, and wishing that she had never met Sir Alvick Ulster.

On that fatal 20th of June, 1857, the moody, melancholy marquis was reclining upon a sofa in the library of Osborn Castle; she remembered it well. She had entered, not knowing he was there, with a light, gay song upon her lips, and started back as she saw his eyes fixed upon her. Not a word passed between them. They had not exchanged a word for days. The marquis was too proud to quarrel, too haughty to stoop to matrimonial bickering, too noble to expose his bitter agony of soul in angry words. He felt, and suffered in silence. What he knew was deadly poison to his soul, and he let the poison gnaw and burn without a groan.

But his eyes spoke volumes of reproach, and she turned and fled, unable to stand and meet that steady, penetrating gaze of the noble, confiding gentleman whom she had deceived.

She never saw him again with the light of life in those dark and splendid eyes. When she saw him again those eyes were dull, dead, and staring.

Yet in her heart, upon her brain, the remembrance of his last gaze had been engraved for ever. It was not strange, therefore, that when she saw that terrible gaze suddenly yet perfectly repeated in the eyes of Hugh De Lisle, she should exclaim:

"Great heaven!" and sink down, with a sharp cry of fear, terror, and remorse.

Lord Peter gave his torch into the hands of one of the women, and bending over his guilty mother, said:

"Are you ill, Lady Matilda? Why are you so agitated?"

"It is nothing! It was a sudden weakness. It has passed?" she replied, as Lord Peter assisted her to her feet.

Yet she cast another glance upon Hugh De Lisle, and could not but shudder.

"It's very cold," she said, "and I am wet. Give me my cloak again. Some of you must immediately secure Evelyn. She must not remain here. She is mad, I tell you. Martha, Janet, Childers—take her! I command you!"

She was in a passion now. She stamped her foot as she spoke, and the women at once advanced towards Evelyn.

Lord Peter, seeing that the women hesitated, called out:

"She must be secured, even if I have to appear violent," and he strode towards the persecuted maiden as if about to grasp her.

"No man shall place his hands upon her in my presence," exclaimed Hugh De Lisle, bounding to his feet, and before the amazed Lord Peter was well aware that he was attacked, he found himself on his back, and the foot of Hugh De Lisle upon his breast.

"Coward!" cried Hugh De Lisle. "Would you dare lay your hands on Evaline Ulster?"

He stooped as he spoke, and drew Lord Peter's sword from its sheath. Then bounding to Evaline's side, threw his left arm around her waist, and rushed with her towards the door, crying out:

"Make way! make way!"

The frightened women screamed, as women will upon such occasions, and ran into a corner, huddling together. But the orderly of Hark Varley, Perryman, was an old soldier, and had all the time been standing at the door, peering in, when he saw his prisoner leap up, he started forward, sword in hand, so that when Captain De Lisle rushed towards the door he was on his guard, a brave and resolute man, who had often smelt the smoke of battle.

But Perryman was no match for Captain Hugh De Lisle, who slashed him twice across the face, and dealt him a stunning blow between his eyes with the hilt of his sword, before the orderly could cry: "Heaven bless me!" had cleared the doorway, and was gone, free, escaped an instant after, and Evaline Ulster with him.

"Oh, ah, really!" roared Lord Peter, scrambling to his feet, all too late to arrest the flight of his agile and formidable rival. "How came that fellow unbound? I saw him well-secured myself."

"Here is a snarl," growled Perryman, as he regained his feet, and felt his slashed cheeks. "The major'll want to have me shot for giving up the key. Oh, you needn't try to catch him, my lord," he added, as Lord Peter moved towards the door. "You've made a pretty mess of it. When I heard my lady say that the prisoner was Hugh De Lisle, I began to feel shaky about keeping him safe until daylight. Why, the French have had him a score of times, and ironed, too, and he has always managed to escape, and generally left a man or two past praying for. Catch Captain Hugh De Lisle, indeed! It is as dark and stormy as the inside of—no matter where, remembering your ladyship's presence. I served under him a year or two, my lady, and know him well. I believe I'd be a dead man this instant if he hadn't recognised me before he made that charge. Catch him, indeed!" he added, as he opened the door and looked out. "Catch the lightning as soon!"

"Oh, ah, but we must at once inform Sir Alvick Ulster," remarked Lord Peter, much crestfallen.

"It is my duty immediately to report the facts to Major Hark Varley," growled Perryman, "and if he does not at once put a ball into me, I will be obliged to anyone who will help me to a few bandages. I was no beauty before, they said, but what I shall look like—"

"Peace," commanded Lady Matilda, sharply, greatly vexed at the result of her visit to the keep. "I will myself report this affair to Sir Alvick. I do not understand the other matter, either. I cannot account for the absence of Olin Cline, who was imprisoned here."

"I heard Sir Alvick say that Olin Cline was here when Hugh De Lisle was brought in," said Lord Peter.

"It is a mystery beyond my solving," replied Lady Matilda, moodily, for Sir Alvick, though he had intimated to her that he had set someone upon the track of Hark Varley, had not told her that he had liberated Olin Cline.

The whole party then left the keep; Lady Matilda very angry, much vexed and sick at heart, and her women marvelling at all that had occurred.

"Think you Miss Evaline is mad?" whispered Janet to Dame Martha, as the other woman fastened the cloaks and shawls about her mistress.

"I cannot say," replied the old woman. "I nursed Miss Evaline, and I have tended her this many a year, and never have I seen any signs of madness in my dear young lady. There is a love mystery in this affair, Janet."

"Perhaps our young lady may be madly in love," sagely remarked Janet.

"No doubt—'tis a way with persons of her age. But, Janet, did you see the face of the gallant they call Hugh De Lisle?"

"I saw nothing but the sword which flashed around his head and well-nigh scared me to death."

"It is a pity you did not notice his face."

"Was it a comely face, Dame Martha?"

"Comely! It was the exact image of the face of Lady Matilda's first husband, the late Marquis of Galmount."

"Oh, then that was the reason why my lady cried out, and sank down when she first turned her eyes upon it!"

"Hush! Lady Matilda will hear you," whispered Dame Martha.

"Come," commanded Lady Matilda, "let us return to the mansion."

Meanwhile, Sir Alvick and Hassan Wharlie had proceeded to the apartment of Major Hark Varley and demanded admittance.

The soldier had not retired as they expected. He was pacing his room to and fro, when the rapping at his door attracted his attention.

He opened it, and did not seem surprised on perceiving his visitors. He greeted them with a haughty bow, and bade them enter.

Sir Alvick was surprised when he saw that Major Varley was not alone. Seated near the table, which stood in the centre of the room, was a man clad in the semi-military garb worn by many of the disbanded soldiers of the day, and as there were a score or more of them staying about the Manor, Sir Alvick supposed this man to be one of them, attending upon the major in the place of Perryman, who had been stationed to guard Hugh De Lisle.

The man was very powerful, though below the medium height, about forty-six or eighty years of age, with closely-cut grizzled hair and beard, a bold and well-moulded set of features, with eyes deep-set and intensely brilliant, restless and piercing.

There was an air of lawless independence in the manner of this man, which Sir Alvick's second glance readily noted, and which he did not at all like.

Mr. Wharlie no sooner saw this man than, with a great affectation of welcome, he glided towards him, saying:

"My dear Chaffton! When did you arrive? Very recently, eh, as I see you are dripping wet?"

In fact the stranger's garments were saturated, and the little pools of water around his heels and under the elbow resting upon the table, proved that he must have just escaped from the storm.

"Chaffton!" exclaimed the surprised baronet. "Is this Ross Chaffton?"

"At your service, Sir Alvick," replied the famous highwayman, not noticing the salutation of Mr. Wharlie, nor even rising to salute the baronet. So, far, indeed, from appearing to desire to show Sir Alvick any respect, Ross Chaffton picked up his hat, till then lying upon the table, and placed it upon his head, saying:

"I but this moment entered the Manor, and asked to be shown up to Major Varley's room, who is an old acquaintance of mine."

"No doubt," replied Sir Alvick, in a sneering tone.

"Come," said Chaffton, in his deep, bass voice, "you need use no sneers to me, Sir Alvick, for, of course, Hassan Wharlie has told you what kind of ground you stand on—very slippery and unsafe for you."

"Why are you here, sir?"

"That is my affair, Sir Alvick. I may tell you, however, that I feared you and Mr. Wharlie and old Jarles might forget to see justice done to my young friend, the major, in the matter of the inheritance."

"What! Suspect us!" cried Mr. Wharlie.

"Why not, Wharlie? If it had not been for me, the major would be lying dead at this moment, not two miles away."

"Eh!" exclaimed Mr. Wharlie, in unfeigned amazement.

"Perhaps I do you and old Jarles wrong," continued Chaffton, fixing his penetrating eyes upon the baronet, "It may be that Sir Alvick had no accomplice in the matter except Olin Cline."

"Olin Cline! What of him?" demanded the baronet, somewhat startled at hearing the name.

"Why, Olin Cline is at this moment in Ulster Keep."

"Hardly," sneered Chaffton. "I met Olin Cline some two hours or more ago, face to face, I was coming from Ulsterborough and he running at full speed thitherward. We met in the dark, and he cried out, 'There is no moon,' and I replied, 'Nor any stars'—so though we could not see each other's faces, we knew we were friends."

"By your exchange of passwords, I suppose, remarked the baronet."

"Very true. Then he gave his name; I gave mine. He at once asked me to aid him in settling an account of his with one who would ride by presently. He told me who it was, for Olin Cline did not suspect that Major Hark Varley was my friend. He meant nothing short of murder, for he holds a bitter grudge against the major—"

"You need not mention that," interrupted Hark Varley, with haughty fierceness.

"I fear when the major gets to be a marquis," said Ross Chaffton, sarcastically, he will forget those who helped him to it."

"I did not ask your aid in the matter, Ross Chaffton," replied Hark Varley. "You and Jarles, and that fellow, Wharlie, have made me believe that I am justly—"

"Oh, we will speak of that presently," interrupted Chaffton, who seemed to wield great influence over the proud young man. "I see that Sir Alvick is on thorns to hear how you escaped the vengeance of Olin Cline."

"I care nothing about the affair," said Sir Alvick, carelessly. "I am sorry that circumstances force me to be in the company of either of you, and as for Olin Cline—"

"Of course you know nothing about him!" laughed Chaffton, very mockingly, however. "Come, Sir Alvick, I know all about it, and was telling the major when you rapped at the door. You liberated Olin Cline, that he might kill Hark Varley."

"It is false!" cried the baronet.

"It would appear incredible to all who do not know that Sir Alvick has played the same game, and more successfully, before," remarked the highwayman. "But we know more than the world in general, Sir Alvick. Olin Cline told me of his interview with you in Ulster Keep."

"He lied."

"No matter. He told me, and I deceived him. I feigned to be his ally in the matter, and bade him hurry on and station himself in the gorge near the bridge, so that he might readily hear a horseman crossing and strike him down suddenly, while I would ride on and meet the major and his orderly, and so manage it that I and the orderly should first cross the narrow bridge, when he could ride upon Major Varley furiously, beat him from his horse and finish him."

"Olin Cline did not suspect my friendship, for he has done me a good turn or two in his time. I was sorry to deceive him, too, but the major is too dear a friend of mine. So, I rode on, met Major Varley, warned him to return to the Manor, which he did. I rode back, and finding Olin Cline, told him that the major and his orderly had become alarmed by the violence of the storm, and turned back. Olin Cline cursed me bitterly, and rode away, saying that he believed I was a friend to Major Varley, but that he would be even with all of us soon. My horse was lame, and so I was slow in arriving at Ulster Manor. But here I am, at your service, Sir Alvick."

"At my service! I desire none of your service," exclaimed the baronet, angrily.

"Perhaps you may, Sir Alvick. Indeed, I know you will," replied the highwayman. "I am as well-informed as Jarles or Wharlie. Do not attempt to brave it out with me. Pray, Mr. Wharlie, what agreement have you and Jarles made with Sir Alvick?"

"We have agreed that it is very silly in Major Hark Varley to give Captain Hugh De Lisle a chance to be pardoned."

"Hugh De Lisle! He is dead," interrupted Chaffton, in surprise.

"Then he has died within less than an hour. I see you have not been told by the major."

"He has told me nothing. I have but just come in, and although I have saved his life this night, he seems anything but delighted to have my company."

Hark Varley could not account to himself for the mysterious influence Ross Chaffton had ever exercised over him. For him there was a strange but powerful fascination about the man, which he had never been able to resist. There was, or rather, until very lately, there had been a secret fear near his heart that Ross Chaffton was his father. He had tried to trample upon this fear, and in vain, until he was lately told that he was the son of the late Marquis of Galmount.

There was another reason, just then, for him to fear this man, which will presently appear, however.

"Hugh De Lisle is alive and well," said Hassan Wharlie, and at this moment in Ulster Keep."

Mr. Wharlie then related, briefly, the facts and concluded by saying:

"Sir Alvick and I are in accord. We are here to persuade Major Varley not to interfere in this matter of Hugh De Lisle's arrest, and the immediate carrying out of the sentence. I say immediate."

"By immediate you do not mean until morning?" asked Major Varley.

"I mean now!" cried Mr. Wharlie.

"It shall not be with my consent," replied Hark Varley.

"Hark Varley," said Ross Chaffton, severely, "I know very well why Hassan Wharlie desires the death of Captain Hugh De Lisle. It is because Hassan Wharlie has formed a suspicion that Hugh De Lisle is the son of Aspa Jarles and Sir Alvick, and therefore the legitimate heir of Ulster. Let me tell you that there is more reason to believe that Hugh De Lisle is the heir of Galmount. I may as well be plain. Sir Alvick cannot use what I say against us. He dares not. Hugh De Lisle is Lord Edward Charles Fitz-Osborn, Marquis of Galmount."

"Then who am I? Not the son of Alvick Ulster?"



"Oh, no, Mr. Wharfe is the son of Sir Alrick," laughed the highwayman, for the face of Mr. Wharfe expressed much consternation and surprise. "That is, we make him so. The son of Aspa Jarles and Sir Alrick is dead. I know very well that Mr. Wharfe does not think so. I know another thing very well, Hark Varly, and that is—were you to stand between Hugh De Lisle and the sentence of death passed upon him, you would spoil all our plans, for he is, as I say, and as I fear others may readily prove, Edward Charles, Marquis of Galmount."

"And who am I?" demanded Major Varly.  
"I would not tell you, my dear major, did I not see that you are about to kick over my kettle of fish in a very awkward manner. You are simply my son."  
"Your son! The son of a highwayman!" exclaimed the proud young man, turning very pale.  
"And who was my mother?"  
"Your mother is Aspa Jarles, or rather, Lady Aspa Ulster."

"So, I have been made a mere tool of by you and your accomplices!" said Major Varly, in a tone of bitter rage.

"At least," muttered Sir Alrick, "it is some consolation to see the proud fellow so suddenly humbled. He scorned to be my son. Ah, he has a very noble father in Ross Chaffton, the highwayman."

## CHAPTER XLVII.

THERE was very little that was really noble in the character of Major Hark Varly beyond his personal courage, and that is too common a trait of the Anglo-Saxon character to be considered a virtue.

From his earliest recollections he was proud and vain; and as it was by no means rare in those days, nor uncommon that persons of noble birth were reared under assumed names, from political or family causes, Hark Varly, at a very early age, had imbibed the idea that he was the son of some great personage. His naturally haughty mind was pleased with the thought, and as he increased in years he had really believed that he was of almost royal extraction.

His mother, the unfortunate Aspa Jarles, as has been related, left him at the house of Ross Chaffton's mother. Old Madam Chaffton, having no desire to be burdened with an infant, very unceremoniously left the child upon the door-steps of her son's house, who put it out to nurse.

The child, by chance, attracted the notice of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, at that time—1688—only Countess of Marlborough; and she, being informed that the infant was an orphan, and being actuated by a whim, persuaded one of her kinswomen, Abigail Hill, to take the charge of it, giving it the name of Hark Varly.

Abigail Hill, by no means pleased with the commission, sent the child to Wales—hoping that her imperious relative would soon forget all about the affair, as indeed she did for several years.

But, as Fate would have it, when Hark Varly had grown to be a lad of ten or twelve years, the duchess again saw him, was pleased with his handsome face and sprightly air; and, on learning that he was the same child she had noticed several years before, made him her parour-page.

Under her powerful patronage, Hark Varly received an excellent education, and the advantages of being playfellow and schoolmate of Prince Eustace, Queen Anne's only son. After the death of the young prince, Duke of Gloucester, the queen became interested in the youth whom she had often seen in his company, and thus Hark Varly rapidly advanced in position, until he became major in the queen's household troops, greatly to the envy and disgust of many gray-bearded veterans, who bit their lips with rage when forced to obey the haughty command of a mere stripling.

The court was full of gossip as regarded the origin of Major Hark Varly, and it was hinted that he was the son of some great man or some great lady. These rumours inflated the native haughtiness of the ambitious youth, until his protectors were compelled to tell him the truth, that they really knew nothing of his origin. But, in the meantime, Ross Chaffton had gained a wonderful ascendancy over the mind of Hark Varly, and bade him disbelieve the words of his patrons, for the time would certainly come when he would be recognised as a titled gentleman of great name and wealth.

In order to support his extravagant tastes, Hark Varly became an expert gambler, under the able tuition of Ross Chaffton.

Ross Chaffton himself was an extraordinary man, for although he was known to be a highwayman and was often arrested, he always contrived to evade conviction, aided by his noble friends at court, with many of whose dangerous political secrets he was well acquainted.

Plots, schemes, and conspiracies for the restoration of the Stuarts to the throne of England were nume-

rous and incessant, so that a bold, shrewd, and intelligent man like Ross Chaffton found no lack of employment as spy or emissary; nor did he fail secretly to make friends with both parties.

An unscrupulous violator of the laws of the realm, he was too useful both to the House of Hanover and the House of Stuart to be given up to the hangman for mere highway robbery. If, in perpetrating his robberies, he had ever committed murder, his cunning had hidden the fact.

Hark Varly, however, knew well the character of this man, but was far too unscrupulous himself to refuse to recognise him as a valuable ally in the gambling saloons of London. He had often wondered why the bold highwayman was so strongly attached to him, but attributed the fact to any cause but that of near relationship, so that when Ross Chaffton declared he was his son, he was for a moment overwhelmed by a variety of emotions.

"Your son!" he exclaimed, staring at the highwayman.

"My son."

"And Aspa Jarles is my mother?"

"No; Lady Aspa."

"Then there is no truth in the story you have made me believe? So far from being the legitimate son of Lord Hayward, Marquis of Galmount, I am the illegitimate son of Aspa Ulster and Ross Chaffton," continued Hark Varly, with fiery bitterness.

"All very true, my lad, and you must make the best of it," replied the highwayman, coolly.

Hark Varly paced the room moodily several times, and then pausing abruptly before Sir Alrick, said, with a bitter laugh:

"To you, at least, this revelation must be very pleasant."

"Why pleasant to me, sir?"

"Because if these men so lied to me as regards myself, they must have lied as blackly as regards you."

"That does not follow, by any means," replied the highwayman. "All is true as regards the baronet. But because you are not the son of the Marquis of Galmount does not prevent your becoming Marquis of Galmount—Hugh De Lisle being dead."

"I understand what you mean," said Hark Varly. "I am now one of a family of cut-throats—being your son. I suppose I must act with you."

"You must," urged Ross Chaffton. "It will not sound well at court to have it told that the very haughty Hark Varly, favourite of many noble ladies, is the son of Ross Chaffton. Her Majesty is a prudish and punctilious dame, and would, at once, dismiss you from her favour. You have many bitter and envious enemies, who will triumph in your fall. Not one of all your titled and fashionable friends will associate with you—you will, at once, become a black sheep, my lad."

"Why did you not tell me all this before now? Why did you not, in the very beginning, say that I was your son? Why tell me now?"

"We saw you would shrink from the enterprise, unless fairly committed to its success," replied Ross Chaffton. "Had we not deceived you, would you have joined us?"

"No, I would not."

"Being a very pious and virtuous young man," sneered Mr. Wharfe, "he would have been shocked at the very idea of being made a marquis."

"Silence, hound," said Hark Varly. "Some day you and I may have something to say to each other, but not now. Ross Chaffton, I admit the wisdom of your course in not making me an informed accomplice in this double plot, but why did you see fit to open my eyes before you succeeded?"

"Because your military ideas were about to allow the true heir of Galmount to live."

"Hugh De Lisle had my life at his sword's point yonder in Ireland."

"Very true; in a duel. It would have been base in him not to spare your life. But do you think he will hesitate to claim his rights, if he once becomes informed of his origin?"

"Is there any danger that he will be informed of it?"

"If the proceedings of the court-martial by which he was sentenced are narrowly examined, conspiracy against his life, by Sir Alrick Ulster, will be certainly discovered. Inquiry will be made why a powerful man like Sir Alrick should have sought the destruction of Hugh De Lisle. It will be revealed that Hugh De Lisle so resembled the late Marquis of Galmount that Sir Alrick feared he might be the son and heir of the marquis. There would be a great stir made, and it might be reported that Hugh De Lisle is Edward Charles, as he undoubtedly is, in my opinion. There is but one way in which this impending investigation can be crushed for ever. Hugh De Lisle must die before the Queen pardons him, and pardon him she will. She is in feeble health and believes she is not far from her grave."

"So she is inclined to be very merciful," sneered Mr. Wharfe.

"I refuse to have Hugh De Lisle executed immediately," said Hark Varly. "You have been using me as your dupe, by your own confession. You are probably still endeavouring to make me your blind instrument. I defy you. I bid you begone."

"Very well, young man," said Ross Chaffton, rising, and very black in the face, "I will go, but I go to the enemies of Major Hark Varly, and will inform them of something they have not heard, of something they have not suspected, of something they will be very glad to hear, of something Hark Varly has forgotten. I will prove to them that Major Hark Varly is in secret correspondence with the King of France, for the violent restoration of the Stuarts to the throne."

Major Hark Varly saw that his life was in the power of the highwayman who claimed to be his father. He knew the vindictive and remorseless nature of the man. He turned very pale and trembled.

It was not because his life was menaced by one who had it in his power to take it, that Hark Varly turned pale and trembling. It was because he knew the sentence of death which could be passed upon him would be terrible. The punishment of his treason would be that he should be hanged, drawn and quartered, and infamy attached to his name for ever.

There was a fair and noble lady among the beauties of the court of the queen whom he devotedly loved, and who regarded Hark Varly with great favour in return. He aspired to her hand. She was as virtuous as she was noble, and though the heart of Hark Varly was base and dark, he would have died a thousand times rather than fall in her esteem.

He paced the room in great agitation; Ross Chaffton regarding him with keen and expectant eyes, Sir Alrick scowling with impotent rage, and Mr. Wharfe coiling himself upon his favourite seat, the table, while whistling a merry tune.

Yet Mr. Wharfe was very uneasy in mind. If the emphatic assertions of Ross Chaffton were true, and Mr. Wharfe was inclined to believe the highwayman had secretly become possessed of very important proofs of what he had said, Hugh De Lisle was the true heir of Galmount. If Hugh De Lisle was the true son of Lord Hayward, perhaps the true heir of Ulster still lived. If that heir, the son of Aspa Jarles and Sir Alrick, were alive, perhaps he might, to use Mr. Wharfe's expression, "turn up inconveniently soon or inconveniently late."

(To be continued.)

## HIDDEN AT NIGHT.

## CHAPTER V.

"MY dear Arana," he said, coughing huskily, as if something stuck in his throat, and impeding his speech, "for ten years I have looked forward to this day with feelings of dread. I have a disclosure to make to you which fills my mind with the deepest anguish."

He paused and took out his handkerchief. Arana gazed at him in undisguised astonishment.

"A disclosure!" she exclaimed; "what do you mean?"

He put the handkerchief to his face; perhaps it was as much to hide his features as to wipe away his tears.

"A disclosure," he continued, plaintively, "which can be no longer averted; and painful as the subject will be to both of us, we must discuss it. You have long looked upon yourself as the daughter of my brother, Nathan Larchmont."

"Certainly," answered Arana, in bewilderment; "am I not so?"

"Oh, assuredly; there can be no doubt of that." He paused, and took a long breath, as if fortifying himself for the next sentence.

"As the daughter of Nathan Larchmont, my elder brother, you naturally look upon yourself as heir to the wealth of which he died possessed?"

"Certainly," said Arana, as he paused again, still in wonder as to what this was leading to.

"Unfortunately, my dear child, though, as I have said, indisputably the child of Nathan Larchmont, you are not his heiress, nor can you inherit one penny of his wealth."

"Why not?" demanded Arana, in great surprise. Joshua Larchmont seemed strangely reluctant to tell.

"Because—because, my dear child!"—he hesitated. "Really, you can form no conception of the pain this disclosure gives me; but I do not see how it can be avoided. In short, then, my dear Arana, you cannot inherit your father's wealth, because—because you are illegitimate—your father was never married to your mother—at least, no proofs of the marriage

exist, which amounts to the same thing in the eye of the law."

A ghastly pallor overspread Arana's face at this dreadful intelligence.

"How long have you known this?" she faltered.

"For the last ten years positively—suspected it from the first."

"Why have you kept it from me so long?" she demanded, mournfully.

"My dear child, how could I cloud your young life with such a secret? It is only absolute necessity which makes me reveal it to you now—forced upon me by the settlement of your father's estate."

"But everybody believes me to be the lawful daughter of Nathan Larchmont," urged Arana.

"I know it, my child," he answered, with gentle commiseration; "but everybody is not so well acquainted with the facts of the case as I am. Your father in early life, speculated in lands, then in grain, and made a fortune. He returned, after five years' absence, to establish a home and settle down quietly upon the money he had made. He brought you with him, a child two years of age, and said his wife had died the second year of their marriage. Of course, no one thought of disputing his assertion. He died suddenly of cholera. Upon examining his papers, I could find no proof of his marriage, or that you were his child—though your resemblance to my late, lamented brother—was proof enough to my mind."

"Who, then, does inherit his wealth?" asked Arana, stunned and bewildered by this unexpected disclosure, conscious that some great evil had overtaken her, but not exactly comprehending its extent.

Joshua Larchmont flushed hotly on his smooth white forehead at this question, but it had to be met.

"Why, I do, of course, my dear," he answered, and his husky cough grew troublesome again; "which saves any unpleasantness to you." He went on more glibly now. "No danger of your being turned out of house and home, my dear girl. I have ever regarded you as my daughter. I have never married, never shall, and you will be my heiress. My will is made already to that effect. The secret never need go beyond us two. I will place an ample income at your disposal, and the world never need know but what you have come into your property. Besides, there is a rich marriage awaiting you. Jasper Sabin is ready when you say the word. His father is very rich. I would advise you to accept Jasper, and name the day this very evening."

Arana understood that the interview was over. She arose and turned towards the door. Then wheeled around, sprang towards Mr. Larchmont, grasped his hand, and pressed her lips upon it.

"Oh, how good you are to me!" she murmured.

He drew his hand quickly away, very much embarrassed.

"There—there—go!" he answered; "I have done my duty, nothing more." And when she had left him, he added, with great satisfaction—"She believes it—I am well out of that."

But he was not out of it yet.

Arana was an honourable and pure-minded girl. She had no great love for Jasper Sabin; he had been presented to her as a prospective husband, and, as he was on his good behaviour always in her presence, she found him agreeable, and made no objection. Hugh Truhart had opened her eyes to the true state of her feelings, and she knew what her heart needed.

She considered herself bound to become Jasper's wife, and resolutely resolved to trample out this new affection at the altar of honour and integrity; but she was not one to steal into a family with this blight upon her name. Jasper must know all before she became his wife.

She put on her hat and mantle, and asked him to accompany her to the village, where she feigned an errand. On the beach, which they should have to cross on their way, she could tell him.

Jasper looked a little annoyed, and wanted to know if Hugh would not do as well. Arana smiled; she had a premonition that the time would come when Hugh would do a great deal better, and the thought pleased her; but she insisted upon Jasper being her escort.

"We have an hour before tea-time," she said; "and we shall not be gone so long as that."

Hugh watched them wind down the path towards the beach with a strange yearning to follow; but he restrained it, and went into the parlour to amuse himself with the books upon the table until their return.

They were back in half-an-hour, Arana looking tranquil and happy, Jasper pale and agitated. Arana went to her room, and Jasper asked Hugh to "come out and enjoy the sea-breeze on the cliff." They walked out and sat down on the huge boulder that formed the crest of the cliff.

"Give me a cigar," said Jasper. "I want something to compose my nerves."

"What has happened?" asked Hugh, in surprise, as he complied.

Jasper lit his cigar, and took a few whiffs before he answered.

He said, at length: "My marriage with Arana is broken off, for good and all."

Hugh's heart gave a sudden and violent bound.

"You astonish me!" he returned. "This is a very sudden breaking off of the engagement. Might I ask the cause?"

"I cannot explain the matter in full, even to you, my boy," answered Jasper, in a confused kind of way. "The amount of the business is, that Arana is not an heiress after all—there is a hitch in the matter—but that is the lady's secret—old Joshua, it seems, has all the property. He has promised to make her his heiress, but we all know what promises amount to. If he should happen to take a young wife, and old men are fond of taking young wives, where would her expectations be then?"

"It is a most singular affair," observed Hugh, reflectively.

"It's a swindle on the part of Joshua Larchmont," cried Jasper, peevishly. "I was getting quite fond of the girl, and, but for her romantic honesty, should have been caught. I am going on board the yacht right away. After what has happened, I feel a little delicate about returning to the house. You can make my excuses—anything you like—and bring our traps on board to-morrow. Will you?"

"Certainly."

"Say I'm ill—and I am, certainly. I'll go down to the beach, and get one of the fishermen to row me on board."

They separated, and Hugh returned to the cottage. Mr. Larchmont looked troubled when he informed them that his friend Jasper had been suddenly called on board the yacht, but Arana only smiled disdainfully.

That evening, as they sat upon the veranda, watching the moonbeams rippling on the waves, Hugh said suddenly to Arana:

"You are free?"

She turned her eyes, inquiringly, full upon his face. "He has told you so? But how much has he told you?"

"That you are no longer an heiress. So much the better—it places us on an equality. My love is unselfish. Am I free to speak?"

"One moment; there is something else. He has not told you all. The man who truly loves me must take me for what I am, for I am above deceit of any kind. Hear me, and then, if you will, speak."

She briefly recounted the story that Joshua Larchmont had told her that afternoon. Her lips trembled, and her heart beat wildly, as she added:

"And now, Hugh Truhart, what have you to say?"

"That you are not accountable for the sin of others," was his prompt reply. "The very blight that this unfeeling relative has cast upon you only renders you doubly dear to me. Arana, will you become my wife?"

A heavenly smile smoothed her troubled features.

"Whenever you like," she answered gently, as she placed her hand in his.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE yacht *Alert* hove anchor and sailed away the next day at noon; but Hugh Truhart did not go in her, as he had promised to see Nep on that day.

That was his excuse to Jasper, but perhaps he had another motive for wishing to linger in the neighbourhood; so he took up his quarters at the little hotel in the village, though there were more pretentious places farther along the coast.

It was evident he wished to be near Larchmont Cottage.

He found Nep at the "yellow" house, who conducted him with great secrecy to a kind of cock-loft, in which he seemed to have undisputed sway, judging by the fishing-tackle, and odds and ends with which it was lumbered.

"What can I do for you, my man?" he asked, as he seated himself upon a huge sea-chest.

"Can you read?" asked Nep, mysteriously.

"Why? Certainly."

"It's a great thing to do," cried Nep, with admiration. "I wish I could; but can you read writin'?"

"Of course."

"Could you teach me to read?" said Nep, growing confidential.

"Oh, yes; in time, if I had it to spare; but I can do better than that. I will get the village school-master to teach you, and pay him liberally for his trouble."

"How long would it take to learn?" asked Nep, dubiously.

"Two or three months, in your case, I should say."

Nep looked very much disappointed.

"Why are you so anxious to learn, just at present?" inquired Hugh, curiously.

"I want to find out something," answered Nep, in perplexity. "Suppose you read them for me?" he cried, inspired by a sudden idea. "But mind, no tellin'—I think they concern Miss Rancey, and that's why I took 'em up, after the old man bid 'em so cleverly, thinkin' nobody was watchin' him. But I'm on the cliff always in the night-time, watchin' the light in Miss Rancey's window."

Hugh could make nothing of this speech. Nep brought out a japanned tin box, from under a beam in the corner, and gave it to Hugh.

"That's it," he said. "There's a picture, but it ain't Miss Rancey, though it looks a little like her; and there's the papers I want you to read."

He placed them in Hugh's hands. The young man examined them critically, scarcely crediting the evidence of his own senses. Nep saw at once that some strange discovery had been made; but though a little apprehensive of the consequences, when questioned, he revealed the manner in which he had gained possession of the box.

"Come with me at once to Larchmont Cottage," cried Hugh, excitedly.

"They won't do nothin' to a fellow for taking it, will they?" he asked, in some alarm.

"Never fear, Nep," answered Hugh, assuringly; "you made your fortune when you took that box—and, for that matter, mine, too."

They proceeded at once to the cottage, meeting Arana in the garden. She was rather surprised at Hugh's excited manner.

"What has happened?" she asked.

"Something that has made me nearly wild with joy, darling," he answered. "Nep, you wait in the hall; if I want you I will summon you. Arana, I must see your uncle at once."

"He is in his study."

"Come, then; I wish you to be present at the interview."

They found Mr. Joshua Larchmont seated at a table, strewn with papers. He was taking a schedule of the present value of the estate left by his brother, Nathan Larchmont. He seemed rather annoyed at the intrusion.

"Pardon me if I disturb you," began Hugh, politely, with the tin box under his coat, just as Joshua had carried it on that night; "but as your niece and myself contemplate marriage, though she is now of age, we deemed it no more than courtesy to acquaint you, and solicit your sanction to our union."

Mr. Larchmont looked very much surprised. He was not altogether pleased with the earnest eyes and resolute bearing of this young man; he had more brains than Jasper Sabin. He coughed gently—a way he had when perplexed.

"Really," he hesitated, "this is so sudden—so soon taking up with the new love before you are off with the old, as the song says. Of course you are aware what Miss Larchmont's expectations are?"

"Precisely," said Hugh. "I now place her fortune in her hands."

He produced the tin box. Joshua Larchmont grew livid as he gazed upon it. He could not speak, but sat like one frozen to his chair.

"Arana," continued Hugh, "you have promised to become my wife, but if, after what you hear, your mind should change, I relinquish all claims upon you. This box contains your mother's picture, the certificate of her marriage with your father, the advertisement cut from the newspaper, and a page, torn from your father's diary, on which the hour of your birth is registered in his own handwriting. In a word, here are the proofs of your legitimacy—the title-deeds to your father's wealth."

"And you, who have retorted it to me, must share it with me," cried Arana. "Ah! you know I would not renounce you."

"This lady gives me the right to conduct this affair to a termination," said Hugh, as he turned again to Joshua Larchmont. "Fortunately your scheme has been nipped in the bud. The reproach you would have cast upon her has not gone far. What could have urged you to this nefarious plot against an unprotected orphan?"

"Gambling," answered Joshua, very humbly. He was much shaken, and trembled like one in a palsy. "I have lost my own fortune and part of hers; but all that I can restore I will."

They left him to his own reflections, for they had much to say. Hugh did not return to the village until late at night, and then he took the tin box with him, escorted by the wondering Nep.

The next morning the waves washed Joshua Larchmont's body up upon the beach. It was surmised that he had fallen from the cliff in the night-time;



but Hugh and Arana knew the act was one of self-destruction.

Six months after, a happy wedding was celebrated at Larchmont Cottage, and Hugh and Arana were joined for evermore.

The handsomest fishing-boat that sails out of S— is called the "Arana," and she is commanded and owned by Captain Neptune Brace. It was named after the giver. The only reward that honest Nep could be induced to accept. G. L. A.

## FACETIE.

**RE-PUBLICANISM.**—The reform of the licensing system.—*Tomahawk.*

**WHAT (W)RITUALISM GENERALLY LEADS TO.**—Execution.—*Tomahawk.*

**A FREE GRANT.**—The President (elect) of the United States.—*Tomahawk.*

**LEMONADE (NOT SPARKLING).**—Mr. Mark Lemon's professional assistants at St. George's Hall.—*Tomahawk.*

LATED!

**That Brute Burley:** "What, Popling! you in the London Scottish? I thought some connection with Scotland was necessary?"

**Popling:** "Well, I've Scotch property!"

**Burley:** "Nonsense!"

**Popling:** "Yes, I have! Three penn'orth o' whiskey at home, in a bottle!"—*Fun.*

**"AYE," SAID THE SPARROW.**—A Mr. Rhodes, of Quebec, has purchased fifty London sparrows, and turned them loose in the governor's garden. We do not know what he paid for the importation, but, no doubt, he will not think they're dear when he hears their "cheep! cheep!"—*Fun.*

DEAD-ALIVE.

On reading the following advertisement, we were tempted to exclaim:

"This is the very (and) whiching hour of night, When churchyards yawn, and graves give up their dead."

The announcement, at a first glance, is startling: Housekeeper.—A highly respectable middle-aged person, who has been filling the above situation with a gentleman for upwards of eleven years, and who is now deceased, is anxious to meet with a similar one. Can be well recommended for kind disposition, economical habits, and household experience. Address, E.B., &c.

When a respectable person, who has been eleven years housekeeper, "and who is now deceased," applies for an engagement, she may fairly plead "economical habits"—her "living" would cost nothing, of course. But we fear that a defunct housekeeper advertising for a new place is such a rarity that she is not likely to "meet with a similar one."—*Fun.*

**A SCOTLAND YARD MEASURE.**—When you hear a policeman, who has acted on information he has received, described as "that active and intelligent officer," you may generally take it for granted that the force of the observation is not worth much more than the observation of the force.—*Fun.*

**HOW TO EXTINGUISH POLICE MIS-MANAGEMENT.**—Turn it off at the *Magna*.—*Punch.*

**PREVAILING EPIDEMIC.**—We hear distressing accounts of the health of the police. In consequence of the arduous duties they have lately had to perform, numbers of them are laid up with—hooping-cough.—*Punch.*

NOT SO BAD AS THAT.

**Huntress:** "Glad to see you out, master George. They told me you were going to get married, and sell your horses; but I wouldn't believe it of you!"—*Punch.*

**HOUSEHOLD HINTS FOR ECONOMICAL MANAGERS.**

**How to obtain a good Serviceable Light Porter.**—Take a pint of stout, and add a quart of spring water. There you have him.

**How to make Hats last.**—Make everything else first.

**How to prevent Ale from Spoiling.**—Drink it.

**How to Avoid being Considered above your Business.**—Never live over your shop.

**How to make your Servants rise.**—Send them up to sleep in the attics.—*Punch.*

PAY MR. STUDD.

Mr. Studd, landowner, Epsom, owns a piece of the course on which the Derby is run. He wants—he actually wants from the people who manage the races, a large sum of money for leave to use his land, and declares that they shall not race upon it unless they pay him.

This is simply and perfectly Monstrous, with a large M.

All that can be said in favour of a man who ven-

tures to demand payment—as much as he can get, too—for the rent of his own property, is that he has been living at Australia, and is unacquainted with British facts.

Does Studd know that money is nobody's object in England?

Is he not aware that nobody who goes to the Derby ever tries to get as much as he can for anything that he can sell or let or dispose of?

Has nobody told him that the horses are run by their owners, solely for the sake of keeping up a noble breed, and of affording a jolly holiday to the people?

Can he be unaware that the betting men who use his land, apparently for purposes of business, are only at play, and that they never really make any profit by that business?

Why is he so ignorant as not to be certain that the tickets for the Grand Stand, and all the other stands, are given away; and that if he has seen money paid when the cards are issued, it was only for charitable purposes? He cannot be so stupid as to think that profit is made out of the Correct Cards that describe what is to be done on his land.

It is shocking to think of such ignorance; but it is his only excuse. Were we the people who manage the races, we would pay him what he certainly has a legal right to demand, in the present absurd state of the law of property, and thus heap coals of fire on his hat, and raise the blush of shame upon his green veil. And the sooner the better, for we cannot be all agitated upon the subject—that anxiety and electioneering are too much for us. Besides, if he is affronted farther, he may remember his Antipodean motto, "Advance, Australia!" and advance his terms accordingly. Pay Mr. Studd.—*Punch.*

## THE FORCE OF EXAMPLE.

**A MOTHER-LOBSTER** with her daughter  
Conversing near their native water,  
And closely watching, as she talked,  
The style in which the latter walked,  
Rebuked her for her awkward way  
Of locomotion: "Tell me, pray,  
The matron scolded, 'why instead  
Of backward, you don't go a-head!  
Such awkwardness!—Of course you know  
'Tis not the proper way to go;  
Sure, folks of sense you thus will shock,  
And make yourself a laughing-stock!"  
"What!" said the child, "do you suppose  
I don't know how my mother goes?  
Shall I adopt the plan you say?  
While all the rest go t'other way?  
I really haven't got the face  
To change the custom of my race;  
It need not put you in a passion,  
I merely mean to be in fashion;  
And, having learned the way from you,  
I'll walk—as other lobsters do!"

MORAL.

To fix a good or evil course,  
Example is of potent force;  
And they who wish the young to teach,  
Must even practice what they preach!

J. G. S.

## HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**BITTERS.**—Dried orange and lemon peel, of each 2 oz.; fresh ditto, of each 5 oz.; brandy, 1 gallon; lump sugar, 1 lb. Steep the peel for ten days. Strain and filter, then add the sugar. If a more intense bitter is required, add 4 oz. of bruised gentian to the peel.

It may be of interest to the public, as well as to the bakers, to know that a metropolitan magistrate has decided that the cottage loaf comes under the definition of fancy bread, as it is made of a superior description of flour. The effect of this is, should it be supported, that a baker is not bound to weigh such loaf on the customer's demand.

**RECIPE FOR MEAD.**—The following is a good recipe for mead: On twenty pounds of honey pour five gallons of boiling water; boil, and remove the scum as it rises; then add 1 oz. of best hops, and boil for ten minutes; now put the liquor into a tub to cool; when all but cold add a little yeast spread upon a slice of toasted bread; let it stand in a warm room. When fermentation is set in, put it into a cask, and fill up from time to time, as the yeast runs out of the bung-hole; when the fermentation has really finished, bung it down, leaving a peg-hole, which may be soon closed. In less than a year it is fit to bottle.

**PARAFFIN OIL** destroys every insect it touches. It is the best remedy for blight or bug, and for the scale on pear and other trees in the open air. It should be applied with a brush, now being the best

time to apply it—that is, after the leaves have fallen. We do not know what effect the vapour would have on plants in leaf, but as a destroyer of bug and scale on trees in active growth, and where there are no plants, we find it safe and effectual. It may be employed for destroying mealy bug on peach trees, but we should, for the present, advise its being kept from the buds.

**DAMP WALLS.**—At the present season the drifting wind often carries the rain so forcibly against walls of brick, and even those of stone, as to carry the moisture through them, even when of great thickness. This evil may be obviated by the following simple remedy: Three-quarters of a pound of mottled soap are to be dissolved in one gallon of boiling water, and the hot solution spread steadily, with a large flat brush, over the outer surface of the brickwork, taking care that it does not lather; this is to be allowed to dry for twenty-four hours, when a solution formed of a quarter of a pound of alum dissolved in two gallons of water is to be applied in a similar manner over the coating of soap. The operation should be performed in dry, settled weather; the soap and alum mutually decompose each other, and form an insoluble varnish which the rain is unable to penetrate, and this cause of dampness is thus effectually removed.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

A BRASS tablet has been placed in Shakespeare's church to the memory of the late Mr. Fairholt, in recognition of the gifts which that eminent antiquarian made to Stratford-on-Avon.

THE works of the Pneumatic Despatch Company (Limited), of which the Duke of Buckingham is the chairman, having been for some time suspended, are about to be resumed, and it is expected that before the end of the year the line of tubes will be completed to the General Post-office in St. Martin's-le-Grand.

A COLONIAL author has published a book, in which he attempts to prove that the earth is not flattened at the poles, but elongated, or pear-shaped. It is getting more elongated every day, and eventually a cataclysm will take place which will altogether destroy Rome. Australia will be safe, however, and the public are advised to go to that colony.

A CURIOUS letter of Napoleon I. to the Empress Marie Louisa is published in the twenty-fifth volume of his "Correspondence." It is as follows:—"Madame, et chère amie,—I have received a letter by which you inform me that you have received the Arch-Chancellor whilst in bed. My desire is that you do not receive anyone, whoever they may be, whilst in bed. That is only allowed to those who have passed their thirtieth year."

THE LAND OF FORTUNE-TELLING.—There are no less than 1,000 ladies in St. Petersburg engaged in the highly remunerative art of fortune-telling. The highest circles of society furnish the votaries to these priestesses, who, it must be observed, also deal in Asiatic perfumes and allow gentlemen to stroll, from the idliest of curiosities, into their little temples. Taking the whole number of inhabitants into account, which would allow one prophesess to every 500 people, St. Petersburg cannot complain of being kept in the dark about coming events.

**TRAIN'S LAST MANIFESTO.**—George Francis Train has issued in his weekly sheet, which he dates from his prison at the Marshalsea, and terms the *Train Extra*, his good-bye to England. One of the items he declares he will pay off upon the back of Miss Albion is the national insult to the Chinese Ambassador because he happens to be an American. Time, he says, will show who has the most power—the American Minister dining with the British noble, or the American citizen dining with the Irish peasant. He must mean, surely, which has the greater power of mastication, for that is the only reading possible.

THE FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER.—It is commonly supposed that the first daily newspaper published in England was the *Daily Courant*, the introductory number of which appeared on Wednesday, the 11th of March, 1702, three days after the accession of Queen Anne. In point of fact, however, a daily newspaper had been started forty-two years previously, while Charles II. was still at Brode, and while Monk was still wavering between King and Commonwealth. In the collection of news-sheets made by Dr. Burney, and preserved in the British Museum, may be seen three numbers of *A Perfect Diurnal*, dated the 8th, 9th, and 10th of March, 1660. This publication consisted of four leaves of small quarto, was printed by John Redmayne in Lovel's court, Paternoster-row, and consisted exclusively of the orders of parliament, of the bills read and petitions presented, resembling in its contents the ordinary *Diurnals* of the Civil Wars.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**PRETTY JANE.**—A stoppered bottle will best answer your purpose.

**FRANK B.**—Injuries, if taken in any quantity, for they disorder the nervous system, and derange the stomach.

**ALICE.**—Apply to any Berlin Repository, or dealer in fancy wools. Most of these houses keep small books upon "fancy work."

**SIXTEEN.**—If you have not already commenced to smoke, do not now begin. At your age the habit will injure your stomach and digestive organs.

**A. B. T.**—We can only advise you to apply to a respectable medical practitioner, and to adhere closely to the regimen he prescribes.

**DANDY.**—1. The person you mention is a quack. 2. There are several cheap books upon herbs, which you may obtain, by order, from any bookseller.

**AN INVALID.**—"Brown's Bronchial Troches," an American remedy, now sold by most chemists, is said to be an excellent remedy for coughs.

**RAIPER.**—If trustees or executors deposit trust money in a bank, and the bank fail, the trustees are not liable for the loss, if deposited in the ordinary discharge of their duty.

**A CONSTANT READER.**—To remove the spots you complain of, procure some horse-radish, and grate it into milk; it will be fit for use in a few hours; apply it with a piece of linen.

**LOTTIE.**—1. There are several works on singing, which you may obtain of any music-seller; the prices varying from one shilling to ten shillings and sixpence. 2. Handwriting indifferent, and requires practice.

**T. GORDON.**—Apply at the South Kensington Museum. Lectures and lessons in drawing of all kinds are given there, at a comparatively moderate charge, we believe, two or three times a week. At all events, write for a prospectus.

**CARLOTTA.**—Be courteous and affable to all; there is nothing which gains so much, with so little cost. He who endeavours to please, must appear pleasant; and he who would not provoke rudeness, must not practise it.

**MARK.**—In the Midland counties, to have a peacock's feather in the house is, by many of the poorer classes, considered to be a bad omen; their impression being that it is a sign of sickness.

**HENRY.**—The Law Amendment Society was founded in 1843. It holds meetings during the session of parliament, and publishes a journal and reports; its first chairman was Lord Brougham.

**RAIPER.**—The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, was instituted in 1824. A similar society exists in Paris; in 1860, both societies endeavoured to repress vivisection and physiological experiments on living animals.

**CORWAL.**—One of the most terrible hurricanes recorded in history occurred in October, 1859; its diameter could not be less than 800 miles, and it caused the wreck of the Royal Charter, on the Angles Coast; 446 lives were lost, and the loss of property was estimated at \$60,000.

**SELINA.**—The *investire* or *eburnum tinus* is an evergreen shrub, which blooms about Michaelmas, and retains its flowers and foliage through the winter; it was brought to England from the south of Europe, before 1396; there are many varieties of this favourite shrub.

**RENEE.**—It is in seasons of sorrow that love more especially roots itself, as trees are best grafted in cloudy days; there is nothing so great, that we should fear to do for a friend, nor nothing so small that we should disdain to do for him.

**GRANAH.**—Intaskillners are the officers and soldiers of the 6th Dragoon, and the 27th Foot, and are so called from the two regiments having been originally raised at Intaskilling, a town of Ulster, where the inhabitants distinguished themselves in favour of King William against James II.

**FLORA.**—The honeysuckle grows in any soil; it is propagated by suckers, layers, or cuttings; it can be raised from seed, for it bears its berries abundantly; nothing disturbs it, nor prevents its blooming in its season, and the quantity of flowers depends on the number of branches to bear them.

**G. BAKER.**—Legitimism is a term applied, since 1814, to those who support the claims of the elder branch of the Bourbon family to the throne of France; its representative is Henry, Duc de Bordeaux, called Comte de Chambord; they held a congress at Lucerne in 1802; 2850 persons were present, including the Duchess of Parma.

**A. B. C.**—By an Act of Parliament, passed in the reign of William IV., it was rendered legal for persons wishing to be married by a legal ceremony to give notice of their intention to the registrar of marriages in their district or

districts. Three weeks' notice is necessary, to give which the parties call separately, or together, at the office of the registrar, who enters their names in a book. When the time of notice has expired, it is only necessary to give the registrar an intimation, on the previous day, of your intention to attend at his office on the next day, and complete the registration. The ceremony consists of mutually answering a few questions, and making the declaration that you take each other to live as husband and wife. The fee amounts only to a few shillings, and in this form no wedding-ring is required, though it is usually placed on in the presence of the persons assembled. The married couple receive a certificate of marriage, which is in every respect lawful. 2. An illegitimate child usually takes the name of the mother, but it may legally adopt any other. 3. Yes.

**M. J.**—In making pickles, always use stone jars, as vinegar and salt will penetrate through earthenware. Never put in the hand to take pickles out of the jar, but use a wooden spoon with little holes bored through it. If you take out more than you require, do not put it back again; keep the jars covered, and in a dry place.

**ASB.**—1. Rabbit skins may be preserved with oak-bark liquor, which can be procured at any tan yard, with directions for the use thereof, at a trifling cost. 2. The birds should be carefully skinned, then rub the inside thoroughly with a mixture of salt, pepper, and alum, and hang them up to dry.

**LEOPOLD.**—Crosier is a staff surmounted by a cross, borne before an archbishop; the pastoral staff, or bishop's staff, with which it is often confounded, was in the form of a shepherd's crook, intended to admonish the priests to be a true spiritual shepherd; the custom of bearing a crosier before ecclesiastics is mentioned in the life of St. Casarius of Arles, who lived about A.D. 300.

**ALICE.**—To make "apple jelly," take two dozen of golden pippins or russets, pare them and cover with water; boil till the apples are reduced to a pulp; then strain through a jelly bag, and to every pint of jelly add 1 lb. of sugar, boil it over a quick fire for a quarter of an hour, and a little lemon juice, keep it boiling, and skim; try a little on a plate, when it sets, it is boiled enough.

**A READER.**—The examination for extra clerks, examining officers, and gaugers in the Customs, is as follows: Handwriting and orthography, arithmetic (including vulgar and decimal fractions), English composition, geography, and English history. 2. You can only obtain a nomination through one of the Lords of the Treasury, in whom the patronage is vested. 3. Your handwriting requires great practice.

## SONNET.

We are weak swimmers in our own of youth,  
Daring the fretted surge and surf of oreads  
With feebly sprawling limbs. The Sea of Truth  
Lies blue and calm beyond, and who succeeds  
In breasting the chafed breakers of the shore—  
Seething with ruffled weed and clouding sand—  
Floats, radiant, onward, strengthened evermore  
The under-drifts of error to withstand.  
For do not doubt it, ye who beat in strife  
The shallow waters but to blind and choke,  
There is a true philosophy of life  
For those who win their way with manly stroke,  
Deep waters, where the rippling splendour glows,  
And the calmest soul has solace and repose.

W. B.

**J. W.**—Sir Richard Mayne, K.O.B., the fourth son of the late Mr. Justice Mayne, one of the judges in the Court of King's Bench, Ireland, was born in 1794. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took the usual degrees, and was called to the Bar in 1822. In 1829 he was appointed a Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, and, for his services in that capacity, he was created a C.B. in 1847, and was made K.C.B. civil division, in 1851.

**POOR SELINA IN TROUBLE.**—Without doubt, the judge of the County Court has power to issue execution against either your husband's body or goods. If you admit the debt or debts, appear before the judge and state your exact circumstances. If your statement to us be correct, and you can make it clear to the judge, he will give you ample time for payment; but if you disregard his summons, he will punish your husband for contempt of court.

**A. B.**—For weak eyes, put a piece of alum about the size of a hazel-nut, and a piece of lump-sugar the same size into a quart of cold spring water, and stand near the fire to dissolve; then saturate a little lint with the mixture, and bathe the eyes several times a day; destroy the lint immediately after using, as it must not be put into the lotion a second time. 2. Handwriting good; the letters being well formed and distinct.

**MILITARY.**—Private soldiers in the English army were, at the instigation of Cecil, the great minister of Queen Bess, first clothed at the expense of the government, and received their weekly allowance directly into their own hands. According to the previous practice, the whole pay of the corps was consigned into the hands of the superior officers, either as to the time or the amount of its distribution, so that the unfortunate soldiers were sometimes absolutely left to starve.

**LUCRETIA.**—The end and life of all our knowledge in religion is to put in practice what we know. It is necessary, indeed, that we should be conversant with our duty; but mere knowledge of it will never afford us that happiness of which religion desires to make us partakers. If we have not its due and proper influence on our lives, Nay, so far will our knowledge be from making us happy, if it be separated from the virtues of a good life, that it will prove one of the heaviest aggravations of our misery.

**WALTER.**—When premises in a county are in the joint occupation of several persons as owners or tenants, and the aggregate rateable value would, if divided among them, confer on each of them a vote, then two of such joint occupiers may be registered as voters for the county; but not more than two, unless they derived the same premises by descent, succession, marriage, marriage settlement, or devise; or unless they are engaged as partners carrying on trade or business therein.

**CATERINA.**—In both classical and mediæval times, combs were made of box-wood or ivory, very broad and short, with long teeth, one side large, the other smaller, and the solid or middle was studded or carved with sea-reliefs. The Britons

used them, and in a Sussex barrow was found a small one containing ivory combs; those belonging to the old Germans were of horse-hair, and the ivory was sometimes gilt; some of the thirteenth century were made of gold, and set with jewels; when used, they were sometimes dipped in grease, so as to make the hair shine like a mallard's wing.

**ALFRED.**—The Dominicans were formerly a powerful religious order—called in France, Jacobins, and in England, Black Friars—founded in order to put down the Albigenses and other heretics, by St. Dominic, was approved by Innocent III. in 1215, and confirmed by Honorius III. in 1216, under St. Austin's rules and the founder's particular constitution. In 1276 the corporation of London gave the Dominicans two whole streets near the Thames, where they erected a large convent, whence that part is still called Blackfriars.

**RONALD.**—The word "tournament" is derived from the French *tourner*, to turn or wheel about. In the feudal ages it meant a military equestrian sport or exercise, in which the knights and cavaliers were occasionally engaged, for the purpose of publicly exhibiting their martial prowess and skill. These exercises, like the public games of the Greeks or the Latins, were intended to make the combatants expert in the art of war; and the arms were prevented, in a great measure from being fatal to the assailants by the points of the swords and lances being broken.

**J. LAURE.**—1. Having "very dear friends" about to settle, avail patiently to hear from them the result of their efforts. If they "do well," they will be enabled to give you an introduction to people in the colony. 2. We do not think it advisable for a young lady to go out to a colony with the hope of obtaining a situation as a governess, without good introductions. A housemaid, or a farm-servant, would have a much better chance of success. 3. Your handwriting is quite good enough for a mercantile office in London. At the same time we are not aware that females have a chance of employment in such situations.

**CHARLES CONYER.** twenty-six (in a profession). Respondent must be pretty and amiable.

**LOGIA.** seventeen, tall, fair, blue eyes, and fond of home. Respondent must be tall and dark.

**A. C.** twenty-one, tall, brown hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, no money, and no objection to go abroad.

**LIEZIE R.** twenty, fair, brown hair, 5 ft 2 in. affectionate, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, affectionate, fond of home, and not under thirty.

**FREDERICK.** twenty-one, fair, 5 ft 6 in., an author. Respondent must be about the same age, fair, medium height, and good looking.

**THIRZA.** tall, dark hair, hazel eyes, good looking, and respectably connected. Respondent must be tall, handsome, dark, good tempered, and have a small income.

**LIEZIE S.** nineteen, brown hair, blue eyes, fair, fond of home, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-five, dark, and medium height.

**FREDERICK.** twenty-three, petite, a good figure, and can cook. Respondent must be about twenty-six, and a steady, industrious mechanic.

**EDITH and ADA.**—"Edith," dark, 5 ft 3 in., and good looking. "Ada," seventeen, tall, fair, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondents must be tall, dark, and gentlemanly.

**MAUD and MARIE.**—"Maud," nineteen, tall, handsome, well-educated, musical, and has \$60 per annum. "Marie," twenty, fair, medium height, dark eyes, lady-like, and will have \$500 on her wedding-day. Respondents must be tall and handsome.

**NELLY G. and LIEZIE S.**—"Nelly G.," twenty-five, tall, brown hair, gray eyes, fond of home, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be respectable, a clerk or a mechanic, tall, dark, steady, and fond of home. "Lizzie S.," twenty-two, medium height, fair, gray eyes, good tempered, fond of home, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be a mechanic and fond of home.

**ELIZA, LIEZIE, and EDNA.**—"Eliza," twenty-two, dark hair and eyes, medium height, good tempered, and fond of home. Respondent must be tall and dark, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred. "Lizzie," seventeen, tall, fair, dark eyes, pretty, a merry disposition, and affectionate. Respondent must be tall, dark, and handsome. "Edna," twenty-one, fair hair, gray eyes, medium height, good looking, and very fond of home. Respondent must be dark, medium height, good tempered, and a respectable mechanic.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

**HUBERT L'ESTRANGE** is responded to by—"Ethelinda," dark hair and eyes, good tempered, but no money.

**ROBERTUS** by—"Marian," twenty-two, dark hair and eyes, handsome, in business for herself.

**HARRY JACK** by—"B. W.," tall, fair, good looking, fond of home and music.

**W. J. P.** by—"Minnie St. Clair," nineteen, tall, fair, and has 1000 a year.

**HARRY SOMERBY** by—"Clara," nineteen, 5 ft 4 in., dark hair, hazel eyes, fair, amiable, fond of music, and thoroughly domesticated.

**D. M.** (a widow) by—"N. J.," fifty-nine, a widower.

**MARIA** by—"J. P.," thirty-five, 5 ft 8 in.

**LILL M.** by—"Gutta Percha," tall, dark, good looking, and a tradesman.

**WILLIAM ST. GEORGE** by—"Lousy De Landis," twenty-one, dark hair and eyes, a thorough musician on both harp and piano-forte; a Protestant, and highly connected.

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